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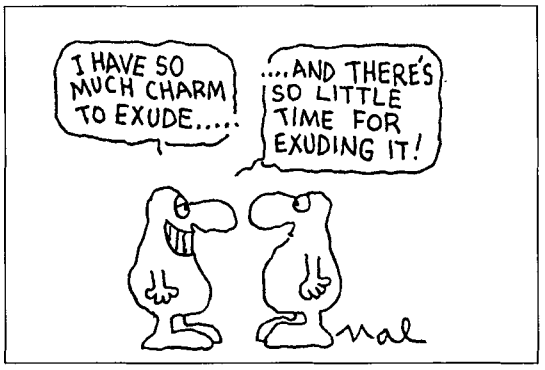


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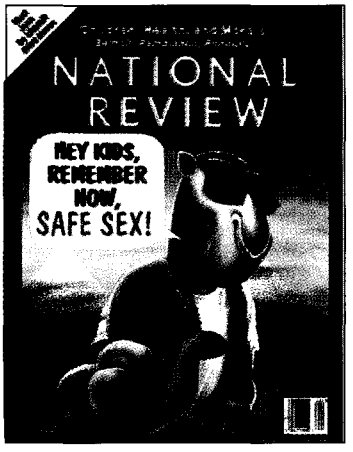


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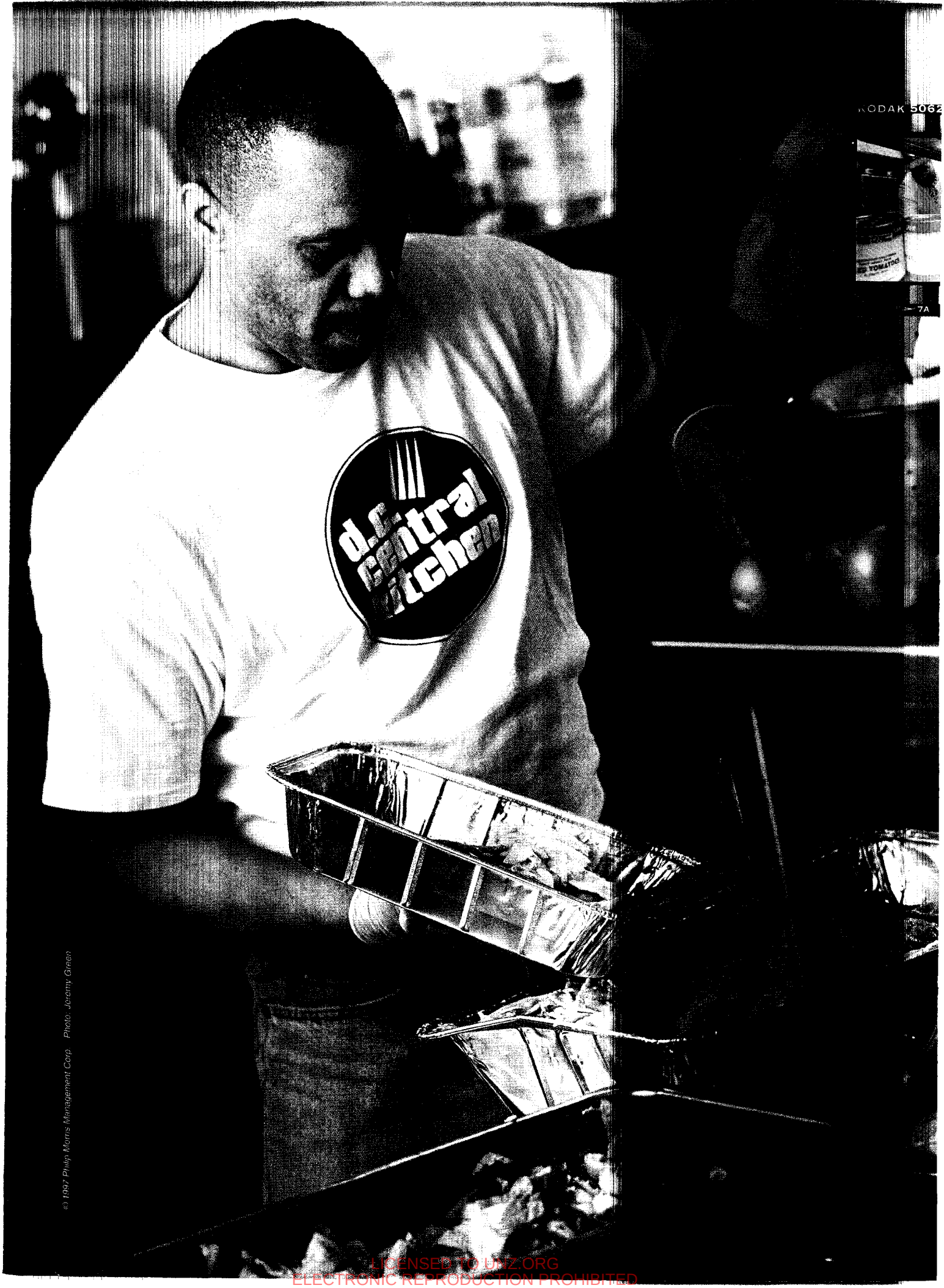


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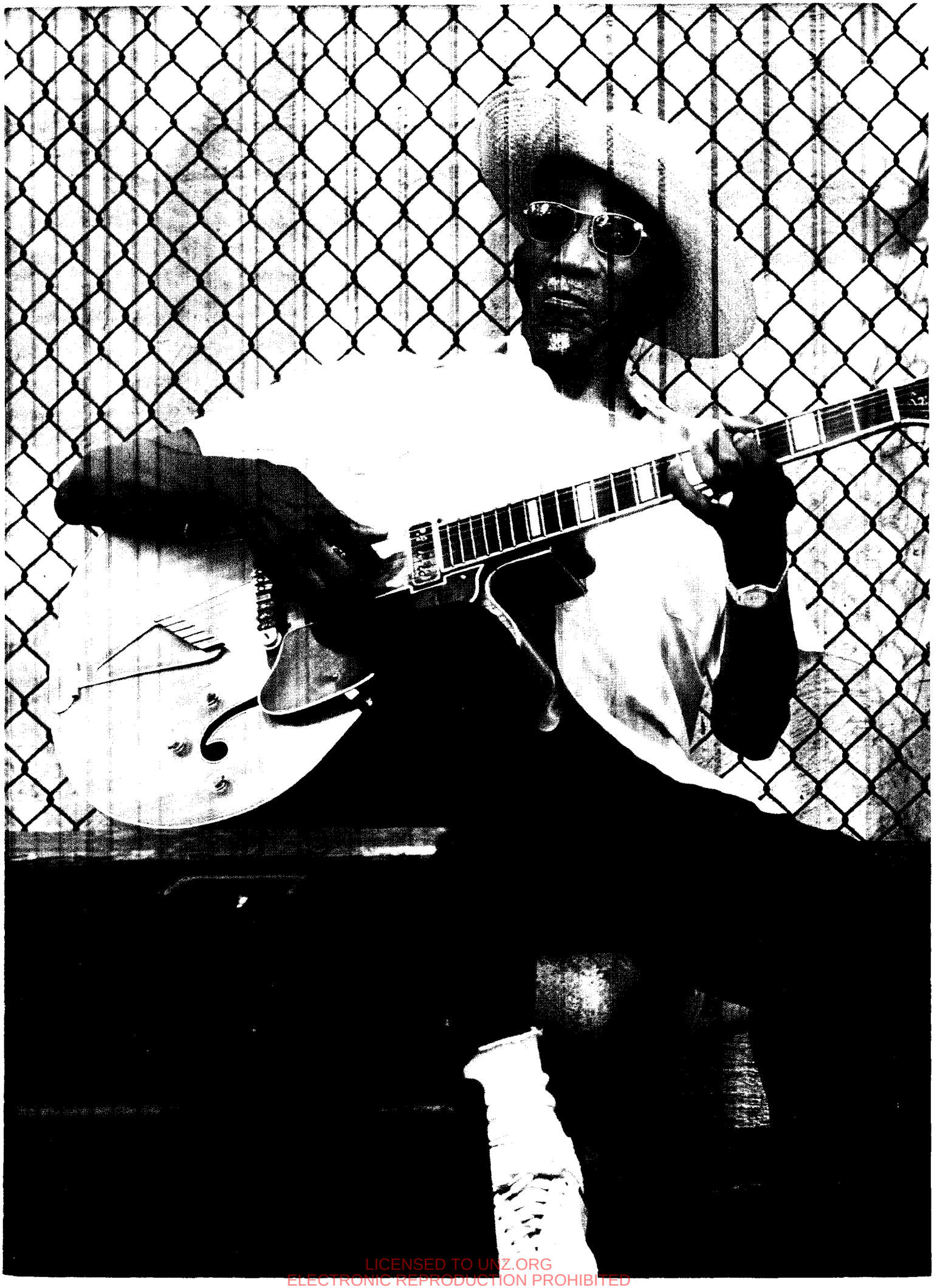

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# "After a while, nothing helped my knees. I had to have something done."

WALTER PERRY

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

A born songwriter, Walter "The Buzzard" Perry serenaded his platoon on the Italian front during World War II.

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# LETTERS

### *Unlimited Honor*

So George F. Will ["Gladstone, Bagged," April 7], the great convert to the cause of term limits, writes a glowing tribute to William Gladstone, who "sat in Parliament for 62½ years with only a twenty-month break." And Will writes that the Gladstone biography "is just right for American readers right now." Will concludes by lamenting the "stark . . . contrast between the best of democratic politics then and now."

Perhaps the contrast has something to do with the modern propensity to treat politics as a pursuit so dishonorable that the only cure for its ravages is to impose arbitrary limits on terms of office. Mr. Will may be right that now is the perfect time for Americans to study Gladstone, because his long career teaches that a politician can become a statesman in the course of lengthy service. It remains a mystery that people today who call themselves "conservative" are so willing to denigrate the wisdom that grows from experience. Term limits are not conservative but radical, and Mr. Will should recognize them as apostasy from right reason. Gladstone certainly would.

*Quin Hillyer*
*Little Rock, Ark.*

*The case for term limits is made in a particular context of political institutions and mores, which is why I believe the Founders were right to reject them. What has changed? Government has become a Leviathan, bent to the purposes of a political class that regards elective politics as a lifelong vocation. Granted, a great statesman can still be produced by long service in elective office, and term limits will cost us in lost excellence. But the pertinent question is: Is that a reasonable price to pay for removing one motive—careerism—for entering, and for behaving in particular ways, in electoral politics? I think so.* —GFW

### *Moral Principles*

*NR*'s response to the *First Things* controversy ["The War of the Roses," Dec. 31] has not really faced up to the issues. You point out that, though they question the legitimacy of the American regime because of insufficient adherence to their moral principles, theocons are not likely to go to war. But you resort to arcane and murky language to avoid real issues. *First Things* is supposed to be asking "for organic thought [as distinguished from inorganic thought?] to be given to the attenuation of loyalties." You lost me there.

"Fr. Neuhaus was complaining about a society that yielded critical authority to a Supreme Court that openly disavows higher law than that of its own making." What does "disavow" mean? Oppose? Fail to enact? Disregard? *NR* seems to endorse "that the time has come to reformulate one's compliance with a democratic society whose laws are no longer set [*sic*] by the people." (Been setting any laws lately?) Does "reformulate compliance" mean not to comply? *First Things* wants the Supreme Court to adhere to and apply "higher law." But the Supreme Court was meant to interpret the Constitution, nothing more or less.

Laws must be interpreted. Wherefrom is the "higher law" to be derived? Who is to interpret it? It seems that *First Things* wants a moral reading of the Constitution. So do liberal law professors such as Ronald Dworkin. Their moral reading produces the very decisions *First Things* complains about. Yet, *First Things* advocates a moral reading of its own, a moral reading that finds moral principles in the Constitution which are not in the document. I, too, have moral principles. The first one is: Don't read into the Constitution things that aren't there.

Where does *First Things* find the "higher law" it wishes to be adhered to by the Supreme Court? There is only one answer. We need a theocracy as in Iran or Afghanistan. With all its imperfections, I prefer our current system, a secular republic.

*Ernest van den Haag*
*New York, N.Y.*

*1)* Inorganic: *"Lacking system or structure" (AHD).* Organic, *one must suppose, means "Not lacking system or structure." 2) We are familiar with Dr. van den Haag's point. It was argued in extenso in these pages by Lino Graglia opposite Harry Jaffa ["God and Man in Court," Aug. 14, 1995]. Mr. Jaffa contends, and we find his position organically satisfying, that the Constitution tacitly incorporates the postulates of the Declaration of Independence. It was not deemed necessary, when the Bill of Rights was argued, to make a case for the fetus or for heterosexual marriage. Dr. van den Haag's position, though seductive, must be approached with some caution. It is, after all, mutatis mutandis, a Nuremberg defense.* —ED.

### *Defending the Tramp*

What planet does George MacDonald Fraser inhabit ["Super Tramp," April 7]? Not just my generation, but also the one before and after, grew up with the Little Tramp, and audiences crowded into theaters to laugh and cry with The Kid.

*John Hospers*
*Los Angeles, Calif.*

Suffice it to say that Chaplin's legacy will continue long after Mr. Fraser's has escaped from memory. Charlie, I'll be loving you eternally.

*Phil Hall*
*New York, N.Y.*

### *Good King George?*

Matthew Carolan and Raymond J. Keating's "Mr. Republican" [April 7] is predictably doctrinaire. It makes one wonder if they would complain about the advent of freedom in Budapest because the leaves still turn red there each autumn. Reality check, gentlemen. New York State simply isn't Arizona. Hard-right politicians like those you most admire don't travel well. The last one who tried it on a statewide basis, the intelligent and voluble Sen. Jim Buckley, lost re-election in 1976.

Our much-admired George Pataki is the best game in town. For this "Rockefeller" Republican, the memory of Mario Cuomo is too fresh to think otherwise.

*P. C. "Pete" Kutschera*
*West Albany, N.Y.*

*Don't worry, Mr. Kutschera. Like many other New York Republicans we're squawking about low taxes and smaller government only until we get offered some nice patronage jobs.* —MC & RJK

### *The Real Issue*

Rich Lowry's "China Syndrome" [March 24] prompted me to wonder why the Federal Government is never mentioned in debates about campaign finance as the largest campaign contributor. A congressman gets over $500,000 a year to maintain his office. He gets plane trips to his constituents, a TV studio in the Capitol basement, and other perks. Most important, he can pressure government agencies to do special favors for his constituents. An old woman who finds that her pension comes much faster after she calls her congressman is a pretty secure vote.

We should realize that these perks are far more important than the campaign contributions decried so by the press. The best estimate I have received informally is that the average congressman's privileges are worth about $2 million a year.

*Gordon Tullock*
*Tucson, Ariz.*



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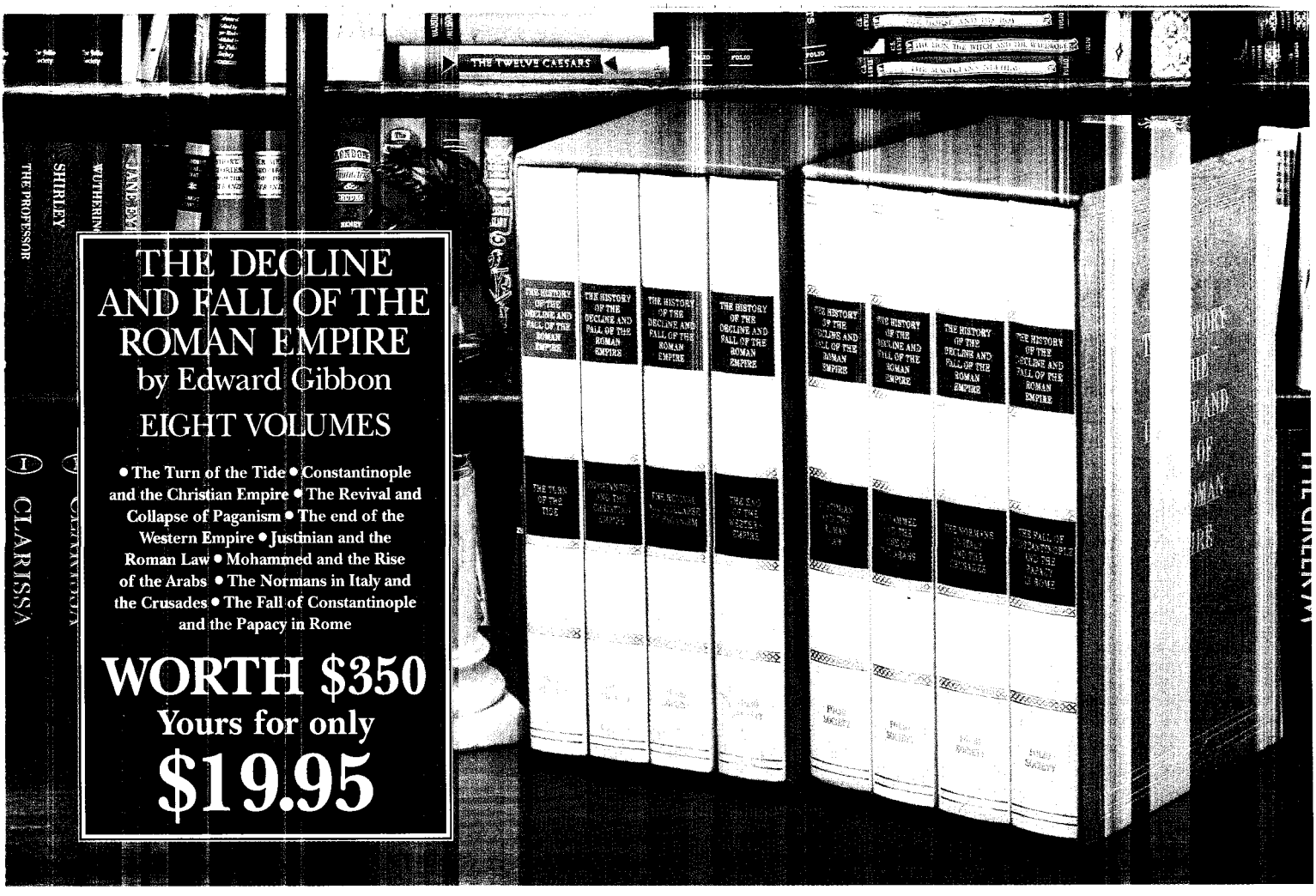
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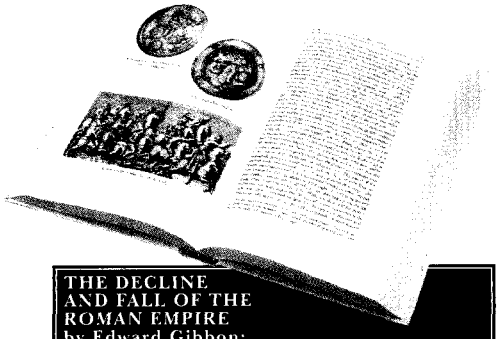

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# *FROM THE* EDITOR

## The Washington Syndrome

■ A small postscript to the successful liberation of the Japanese embassy in Lima: the length of the diplomat-hostages' captivity apparently removed any affection they might have developed for their leftist captors.

Such affection—known as the "Stockholm Syndrome"—was a surprising discovery of the many hostage crises in the Sixties and Seventies. Some hostages indeed have been known to fall in love with their captors. A case in point: Jimmy Carter during the Iran hostage crisis was the only President ever to suffer from the Stockholm Syndrome.

What is at work here is morale—the key factor in war and politics, as I learned some years ago in a cocktail-party conversation with Sir Geoffrey Jackson, the British diplomat who was kidnapped by Tupamaro guerrillas in Uruguay in 1971. Jackson told me that when his captors announced that he was now being held in a "people's prison," he politely contradicted them.

"Not at all," he replied. "It is you who are now in the British Embassy. Please make yourselves at home." He went on to explain that the embassy was not a particular building but wherever the ambassador happened to be.

This infuriated his hosts because it challenged their version of reality and so their wider political claims. In the end, Sir Geoffrey was released by the usually intransigent Tupamaros "as a humanitarian gesture." My guess is that, because of his greater morale, he was making a cultural conquest of them. Another few weeks and they would have been proposing arms-control negotiations.

One question remains. Since someone is clearly holding Trent Lott hostage, why won't the Majority Leader at least claim that Congress is GOP territory?

■ By the time you read this, we shall know the result of the British election. With a week to go, however, my bet has to be that Labour will win substantially.

The bet is a reluctant one, even though at times I have been tempted by Henry Kissinger's formula for the Iran–Iraq War: both sides should lose.

Once the proletariat's champion, Labour is now the vanguard of the New Class, which—to plagiarize my *Wall Street Journal* review of Tony Blair's book, *New Britain*—is the non-technical intelligentsia "that seeks everywhere to advance its power through law and regulation while evading the voters' control by transferring political decisions from democratically accountable bodies to bureaucracies, the courts, and even international agencies." (Ignore Blair's book, incidentally—it's a real snoozer.)

Since this class is consciously hostile to conservatism as well as unconsciously hostile to democracy, there are good reasons for regretting Labour's victory.

There were also good reasons for voting Tory, but unfortunately John Major discovered them very late in the day. Like Bob Dole, who kept his distance from the anti-quota California Civil Rights Initiative until the final days of the campaign, when he half-discredited the measure by embracing it, Mr. Major straddled the central issue of the single European currency with a policy of "wait and see."

Then, when 240 of his own backbenchers issued election addresses declaring outright opposition, he agreed to let them vote their consciences and, finding this popular, embarked on a robust "Euro-skeptic" campaign.

Too late to save him from defeat, but maybe in time to save him from a meltdown of Canadian Tory proportions.

The deathbed conversion is an interesting phenomenon of conservative politics: an admission that the instincts of the conservative rank-and-file were right all along, made by a moderate leadership too late to win the election, and discrediting conservative issues at the margin.

Just what the New Class ordered.

■ My thanks are belatedly offered to Ed Rubenstein for his splendid guest-editorship of our special financial issue.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN


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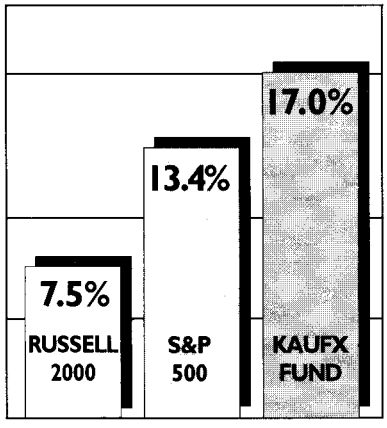


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# *FOR THE* RECORD

■ **Newt Gingrich** predicts that "the Democratic Party will gradually split into two factions. One faction will work on legislation and get things done and join us in lowering taxes and returning power to the American people. The other faction will be a small group of bitter people who will sort of chant anti-Newt slogans and march in circles." . . . *Wall Street Journal* opines, "Our judgment is that in fact Mr. **Clinton** is guilty of essentially the same things over which Mr. **Nixon** was hounded from office—abusing his office to cover up criminal activity by himself and his accomplices, and misleading the public with a campaign of lies about it." **Michael Kelly**, editor of *The New Republic*, asks, If Bill Clinton really believes he's innocent, why doesn't he encourage **Susan McDougal** to testify? "Why does an innocent man not rush to urge his friend to end her suffering, and to clear his name?" . . . Feistiness of Republican National Committee Chairman **Jim Nicholson** cheers conservatives. When Deputy Treasury Secretary **Lawrence Summers** said, "There is no case [for repeal of the estate tax] other than selfishness," Nicholson replied, "The Clinton–**Gore** Administration now wants to tax us to death after death." (Summers apologized the next day.) Nicholson calls on Democratic National Committee Chairman **Roy Romer** to keep his word on returning $1.5 million in tainted contributions. And he challenges conventional wisdom on gender gap: "We lost a lot of women over education, not abortion." . . . Slip of the tongue? House Budget Committee Chairman **John Kasich** (R., Ohio) refers to Sen. **Pete Domenici** (R., Ariz.), frequently at odds with conservatives: "I'm working with Domenici and the Republicans to try to get a good budget deal." . . . Finance ministers of industrialized countries, including **Robert Rubin** and **Alan Greenspan**, at G7 meeting, agree that the dollar's value should go down.

■ *New York Times* runs editorial favorable to school vouchers, concluding that "the Milwaukee data should serve notice on the teachers' union—and large, urban districts everywhere—that if the schools do not improve quickly, vouchers could become irresistible." . . . Speaking of teachers' unions, **Alexis de Tocqueville** Institute reports that more than two thousand officials of the National Education Association and its state affiliates make more than $100,000 per year in salary and benefits. . . . In *The Nation*, **Edmund White** delivers what he intends to be an endorsement of multiculturalism: "To me the idea of multiculturalism is incompatible with a canon; now I'd go even further and say multiculturalism is incompatible with the whole business of handing out critical high and low marks."

■ Does the Constitution allow California voters to shelve race and gender preferences, or are they required to keep them? Reagan appointee Judge **Diarmuid O'Scannlain** rules that "The Fourteenth Amendment, lest we lose sight of the forest for the trees, does not require what it barely permits." . . . **Ward Connerly** and Rep. **Charles Canady** (R., Fla.) kick off Florida Civil Rights Initiative. For information call 407-426-7665 or fax 407-872-7888. . . . U.S. District Judge and Clinton appointee **Claudia Wilken** strikes down California's seven-year-old term limits. . . . Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), a/k/a the "gay jobs" bill, is re-introduced. Family Research Council charges it would prevent employers from punishing any employee for any sexual conduct off or on the job, even if the conduct is illegal or injurious to business interests. . . . Libertarian Party urges repeal of law mandating smaller toilet-tanks: "You shouldn't have to take *that* sitting down." . . . Employees of the Federal Communications Commission are ordered to attend "Cultural Diversity in the Workplace training."

*"Did anyone ever tell you how lovely you are when you're auditing?"*

■ Prime Minister **Ryutaro Hashimoto**'s body language indicated to Japanese his fury during his public congratulations to Peruvian Pres. **Alberto Fujimori** over liberation of hostages. Tokyo tried to pay **Fidel Castro** to take the terrorists and had Fuijimori's promise not to use violence, until the terrorists refused medical treatment for the hostages. . . . Hong Kong journalists draw worst conclusion from installation of **Feng Xiliang**, former editor of an official Communist Chinese newspaper, as an unannounced addition to the staff of the *South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong's No. 1 English newspaper. Secretary of State **Madeleine Albright** says she is attending July 1 turnover ceremonies to "emphasize America's continued involvement in protecting our interests and supporting Hong Kong's people." . . . Former House Speaker **Tom Foley** is leading contender for ambassador to Japan; **Felix Rohatyn**, New York financier who spent adolescence in France after fleeing Nazi Austria, is going to Paris.

■ National Republican Congressional Committee's **Rich Galen** issues "talking points" on the **Dole** loan to Gingrich: "If Newt had cut off his left arm to pay this reimbursement, **Bonior** would have complained that there needed to be several new investigations because Newt is right-handed." . . . In triple entendre at White House correspondents' dinner, Clinton notes that **Chelsea**'s impending departure opens up another bedroom. . . . *Washington Post* reports that as Gingrich left Louisville Area Chamber of Commerce amid throng of reporters, he handed a Louisville Slugger to press secretary **Christina Martin** with words, "Here—you'll know what to do with this."



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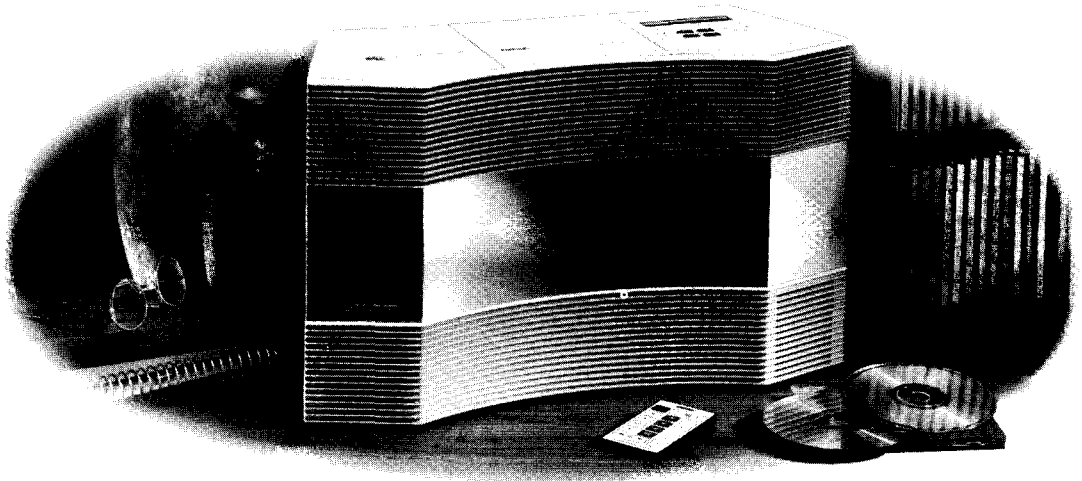

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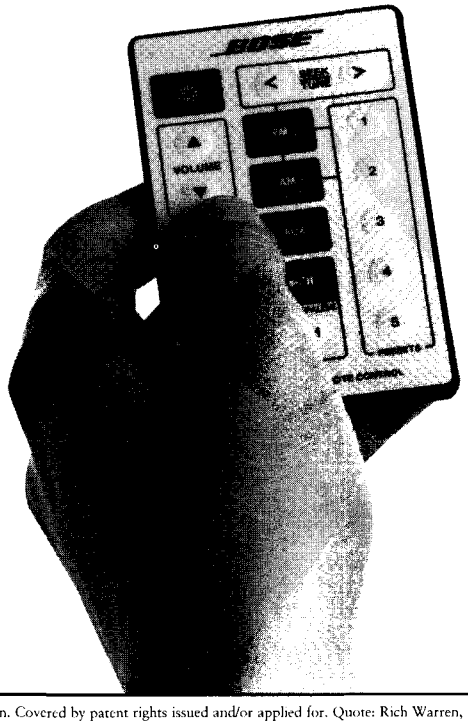


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# THE WEEK

■ The week's lesson is that liberals don't care what you volunteer for, so long as it's compulsory.

■ Although Bob Dole successfully opposed the Chemical Weapons Convention last year, he endorsed it at an April 23 ceremony that helped the White House enjoy one of its best weeks since, well, running against Dole for President. Dole's endorsement was also a boon for Trent Lott, who is rapidly proving himself Dole's successor as Senate Majority Leader in every sense of the term. Lott easily had the votes to kill the CWC, but decided instead to offend his conservative base, win media kudos for being a "doer," and placate the Clinton White House by delivering the GOP votes needed to ratify the treaty. Lott figures his cave-in on CWC will win him White House concessions on the budget. Good luck. If Dole demonstrates that losing is habit-forming, the new Majority Leader is showing that it can be contagious too.

■ Indeed, the emerging budget deal in the Senate just looks like another Republican surrender. A combination of strong economic growth and lower than expected entitlement spending means the budget has become $400 billion easier to balance over the last year. No matter. Senate Budget Committee Chairman Pete Domenici—the biggest-spending deficit hawk ever—is promoting a deal that will have $100 billion more in discretionary spending than even President Clinton proposed last year. The package is likely to include a smattering of tax cuts worth no more than a net $60 billion over 5 years. And the Senate deal may well depend on a politically disastrous CPI fix—a change in the government's inflation estimate—that will have the effect of cutting all federal payments, including Social Security, and raising taxes through bracket creep. (House Democrats and unions are, no doubt, already dusting off their attack ads.) The indefatigable Sen. Phil Gramm (R., Tex.) is calling this outlined deal the worst budget he has seen in his career, and vowing to fight it. Roughly 25 conservative Republicans can be expected to stand with him in what will probably be a losing fight. Lott can just reassemble his CWC coalition of the moderate half of the GOP caucus and Senate Democrats. Which has conservatives wondering: Is Trent Lott their majority leader or President Clinton's majority whip?

■ The Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta has finally issued its analysis of the Dole presidential campaign, reports M. Stanton Evans, and it confirms that conservatism "cannot be transmitted by casual contact."

■ The terrible North Dakota floods might be an effect of global warming, a concerned President Clinton speculated. In fact, the floods were caused by huge snowfalls in the upper Midwest, and the long freeze of Lake Winnipeg, which blocked run-off. Does one bad winter mean we are experiencing global cooling? No, but this does: the NASA/University of Alabama (Huntsville) team that monitors orbiting satellites has noted a statistically significant cooling trend, of minus 0.048°C per decade. The dip, though real, isn't much, so scientists aren't predicting an Ice Age just yet. After all, they are not greens.

■ Latest to show up on the Democrats' list of awkward donors is convicted spy Aldrich Ames, who contributed $5,000 of his KGB earnings. We can't wait to see just whom they return the money to this time.

■ As William Niskanen points out in our symposium of economists (p. 47) the Fed has changed under Alan Greenspan into one of the few successful federal agencies of the Nineties. The Fed was right to move preemptively against inflation. No one knows the future, and it is possible that the Fed did not need to act just now. But the Fed's critics—a mixed bunch, including Newt Gingrich and Jack Kemp as well as Tom Harkin and Paul Sarbanes—think they can outguess the markets and time anti-inflationary moves precisely. The past thirty years should have taught everyone that certainty is impossible. By the time rising inflation is a sure thing, the cost of bringing it down is a recession. Under Greenspan, domestic prices have still risen 20 per cent since 1990. (Even at 2 per cent inflation, a dollar loses half its value every generation.) Recent performance is better, but not yet good. So Congress should pass Connie Mack's bill mandating zero inflation. Such an explicit commitment

Chicago Tribune
macnelly.com
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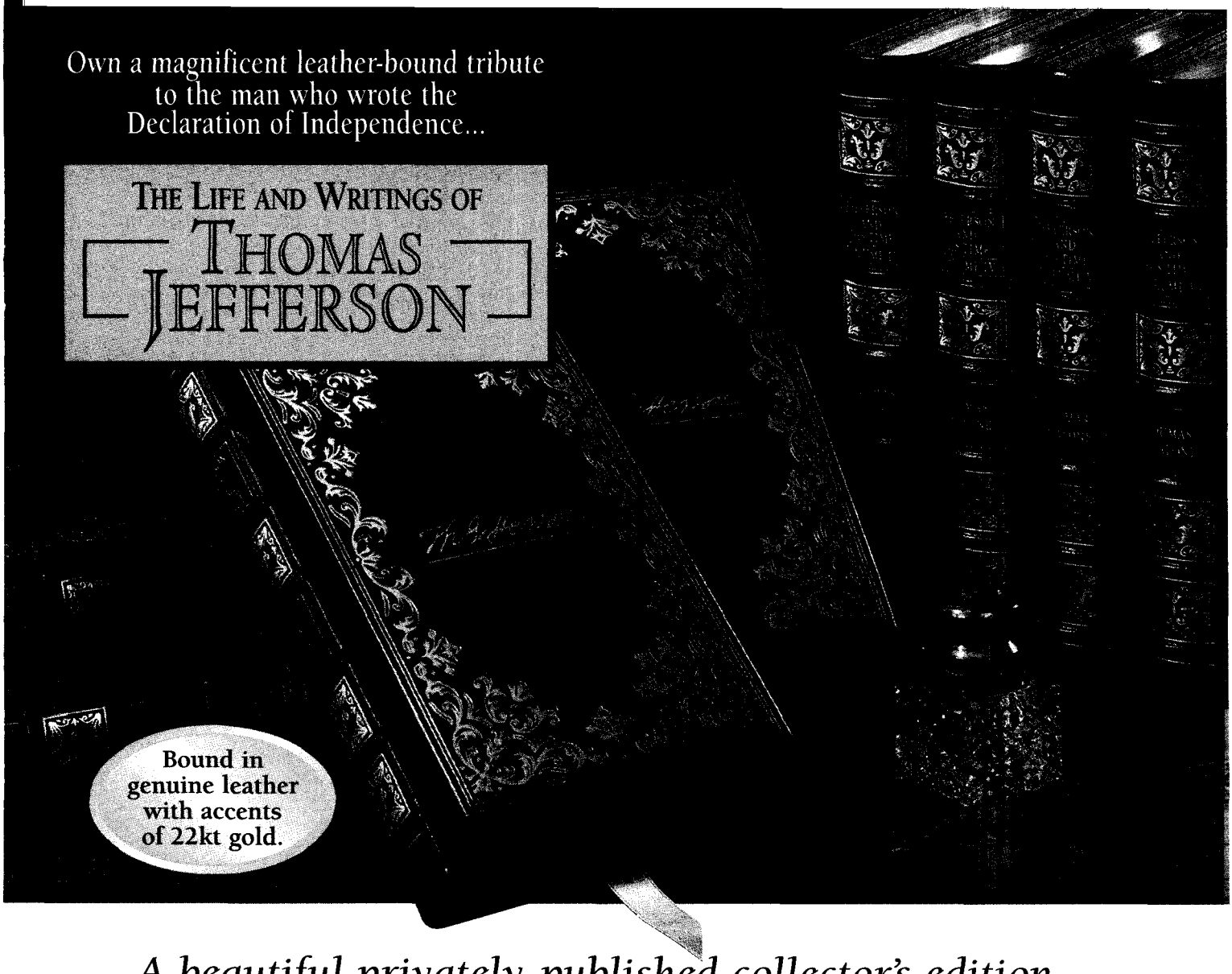

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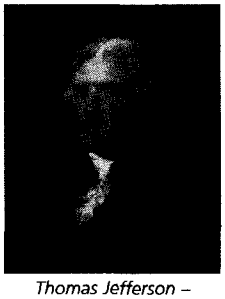

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would remove the ambiguity in current law that sends the Fed in too many different directions, and ensure that it will retain its concern about inflation when Alan Greenspan is no longer there to take the heat.

■ The *Miami Herald* reports that Mr. John Henry Cabanez, who allegedly worked for the Castro regime for decades and is a suspected Cuban counter-intelligence agent, contributed $61,000 to the Clinton campaign. It begins to look as if the "Big Brother" White House database, which records all these niceties, could be the key to breaking enemy intelligence operations all over the world.

■ It beats the stock market. Big Labor spent $300 million helping Democratic campaigns last year and is about to see a nice return on its investment. President Clinton has promised the AFL–CIO an executive order that will, in effect, require that federal construction contracts go to union shops. Since about 80 per cent of construction companies are non-union, the executive order is a windfall for unionized companies and their workers, steering an estimated $240 billion worth of federal contracts to them over five years. Sen. Don Nickles (R., Okla.) opposes this pay-back, threatening to block the confirmation of diversity hustler Alexis Herman as Labor Secretary unless the White House backs off. Sorry, Mr. Sweeney, the Federal Government isn't your piggy bank—even if you have bought the White House.

■ The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation represents thousands of teachers involved in over a hundred cases against the National Education Association. So now the NEA is using the discovery phase of one case to demand, among other information, the name and address of every Foundation supporter. The NEA won't get the list. The last time the confidentiality of donors was threatened, Foundation president Reed Larson was prepared to go to jail to protect it. Obviously, the NEA feels vulnerable: in modern politics, legal harassment is the sincerest form of flattery.

■ In February, *NR* poked some fun at the White House coffees, joking that "a 20 per cent surcharge is required for those who wish not to sit with Al Gore." This week at the White House Correspondents' dinner, Mr. Clinton cited a Harold Ickes memo detailing how donors could meet Al Gore and discuss reinventing government for $10,000—"and for $20,000, you don't have to go."

■ To Mr. and Mrs. Gore, Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger, Alan Greenspan and Andrea Mitchell, Madeleine Albright, Robert De Niro, Ellen DeGeneres, and all the rest of you who attended, get your chuckles first in NATIONAL REVIEW, and for another $20,000, you don't have to go to long-winded political dinners.

■ Steve Forbes, the activist publisher, is on a crusade to inject some verve into a GOP sorely lacking it. Forbes's new group, Americans for Hope, Growth, and Opportunity (800-760-1610), recently ran a statewide radio campaign on behalf of Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad's successful effort to cut taxes 10 per cent; it ran ads nationwide in favor of the ban on partial-birth abortion in the run-up to the House vote; and it financed a radio campaign against Senate approval of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The combination of Mr. Forbes's ads and his willingness to disagree publicly with congressional leaders when they stray (like Newt Gingrich on taxes) makes him a force in the party. Meanwhile, the flat-tax proponent has widened his appeal from economic to social conservatives, speaking more forcefully on moral issues, especially abortion. Addressing the National Question and multiculturalism seriously would make him even less of a capitalist tool. Consider Steve Forbes a GOP growth stock.

■ Jude Wanniski has founded a supply-side university. Tuition is free, and the only admission requirement is the ability to download his website at www.polyconomics.com. Because participation is anonymous, he writes, "PhD economists trained in Keynesian or monetarist theory can sneak in without embarrassment." Check it out—every minute Mr. Wanniski spends on the course is one he can't spend doing PR for Louis Farrakhan.

■ Just as the Immigration and Naturalization Service projected last year (but conveniently failed to tell either Congress or the American people when reform was being debated), legal immigration surged by 27 per cent in FY 1996, to 916,000. Most of the increase was in the mostly poor, mostly low-skilled, family-based categories. But what do another 600,000 low-skilled workers matter to Americans—apart from Americans who are former welfare recipients competing with these immigrants for jobs? Looking on the bright side, however, Sen. Spencer Abraham (R., Mich.) massaged the figures vigorously in a Dear Colleague letter drafted by his new immigration spin-doctor, Stuart Anderson (late of the Cato Institute). Sen. Abraham assures his colleagues that this increase is only temporary (the INS projections disagree); that many

## *Good-bye Forever*

*It's always a shock to discover*
*(Like Adam and Eve on the lam)*
*That Hillary's heave-ho is final,*
*Along with the President's "Scram!"*
*The sensitive never recover;*
*The felons continue to hope,*
*But neither has ever sent fruitcake*
*Or derringers hidden in soap.*

—W. H. VON DREELE

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of the immigrants were already in the U.S. illegally (but they are now eligible to bring in their extended families); and that legal immigration in 1996 was lower than in ten other years since 1904 (which still leaves 81 years since 1904 when immigration was lower yet—generally much lower). Instead of conjuring away statistics, Sen. Abraham would be better employed censuring INS Commissioner Doris Meissner, who, in addition to misleading Congress last year over immigration levels, presides over an agency which auditors report ignores its own safeguards against granting citizenship to criminal aliens. If the GOP were awake on immigration, Mrs. Meissner would have to emigrate.

■ The *Titanic* sank 85 years ago, and only now do we know, thanks to Pierre Salinger, that it was rammed by an American battleship, probably the *Maine*.

■ Bands played, four Presidents and two contenders painted over graffiti, and the Summit for America's Future, the Colin Powell–chaired push for volunteerism, was kicked off in Philadelphia. The volunteerism of churches and charities is a salutary American tradition (acknowledged and encouraged by government tax breaks). But it is important to remember the curve of the last great volunteer push. At the turn of the century, Americans of good will, often religiously inspired, went into settlement houses to help the poor. When not enough poor seemed to be helped, some of the volunteers turned to the state. (Eleanor Roosevelt was a settlement-house veteran.) Decades and a trillion dollars later, the poor stand in need of—volunteerism. This time around the circuit is already in place, waiting to be completed. Mario Cuomo greeted the Summit with an op-ed piece on "the *real* volunteerism, our government," which is "the

# Right Data

"AFTER two years in Washington, I long for the sincerity of Hollywood," Sen. Fred Thompson (R., Tenn.) quipped recently. He was referring to the latest federal budget.

Look at discretionary spending. Though it accounts for just one-third of the budget, President Clinton has stuffed three-quarters of all spending cuts between now and 2002 into this category. Defense, which represents about half of discretionary spending, has already been cut to 3.4 per cent of GDP today, from 5.3 per cent in 1990. Mr. Clinton wants to slash defense further, to 2.7 per cent by 2002.

An even bigger fraud occurs in non-defense discretionary spending, home of federal infrastructure, education, and other "investments" that Mr. Clinton once championed. For 15 years they have borne the brunt of deficit reduction. Yet Clinton's long-term plan takes them down further—to 2 per cent of GDP around 2015, from 3.8 per cent of GDP today. That would pare government back not just to pre–Great Society but to pre–New Deal levels. Great news, if only we could believe it.

When Mr. Clinton released the budget, he made a little-noticed claim: not only would his plan meet the 2002 target, it would forestall deficits for two decades after that. That's impossible unless the big entitlements—Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid—are throttled. In 1996 those programs ate up half the budget. Those expenditures can be cut only by new legislation.

So what does the President propose? On Medicare, the White House decrees that fees paid to hospitals will decline from their current 4.1 per cent real annual growth to 1.5 per cent in 2020. Doctors will also see their payments slashed. And for good measure, the Trust Fund avoids insolvency by shifting costly home services to a different account. "There is absolutely no policy change associated with the . . . reduction," says Carol Cox Wait of the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. "It's insane." Projections show that medical entitlements will consume 6.6 per cent of GDP in 2020, up from 3.6 per cent now.

Social Security costs are driven by inflation and demographics. Shaving 1.1 percentage points off the official CPI, as was recently recommended by a panel of economists, could reduce the deficit by $50 billion by 2002, with smaller Social Security payments accounting for much of the improvement. Most economists, including the President's own, believe some sort of CPI fix is essential for long-term budget balance, and yet the President seemed to reject the notion last month. Meanwhile, the Social Security Trust Fund will be in the red starting in 2012; total insolvency is projected for 2029.

At least welfare has been taken off automatic pilot. Last year's reform changed the main program — AFDC—from an entitlement to a block grant, meaning that it will have to undergo regular congressional scrutiny. But at $17 billion in 1996, AFDC is just 1 per cent of the budget. Middle-class entitlements are far larger and more difficult to change.

Ultimately, the President's balanced-budget forecast hinges on continuation of the economic performance of the past few years. Mr. Clinton sees growth staying near its recent average, at 2.3 per cent, while unemployment stays as low as 5.5 per cent, and inflation a very low 2.7 per cent. So far so good: tax revenues generated by the surging economy could push the deficit below $100 billion this year, according to the Congressional Budget Office. But there has never been a period of economic growth as prolonged as the one foreseen in the budget. Even a mild slowdown would send deficit numbers soaring.

—Ed Rubenstein

**Clinton's Plan: The Return of Rosy**
*(Percentage of GDP)*

| | Total Outlays | Entitlements | Discretionary | Surplus/ Deficit | Federal Debt |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1990 | 22.0% | 6.9% | 8.8% | –4.0% | 42.4% |
| 1996 | 20.8 | 8.5 | 7.1 | –1.4 | 49.9 |
| 2000E | 20.1 | 8.4 | 6.2 | –1.0 | 47.2 |
| 2002E | 18.9 | 8.8 | 5.7 | 0.2 | 43.5 |
| 2010E | 18.1 | 9.6 | 4.8 | 0.8 | 27.5 |
| 2020E | 19.1 | 12.2 | 4.2 | –0.1 | 15.8 |
| 2050E | 22.9 | 16.1 | 2.9 | –3.5 | 51.3 |

Source: OMB. E = Estimate



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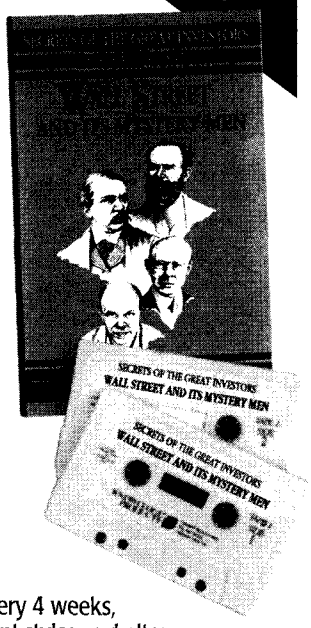


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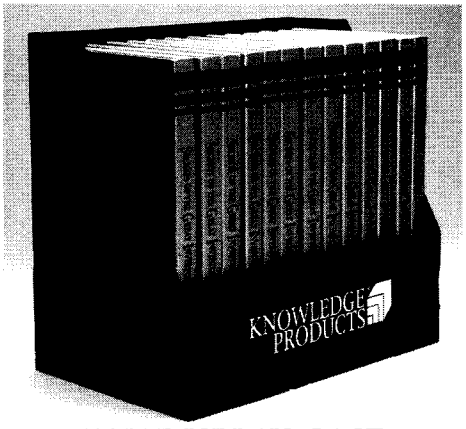


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coming together of Americans to decide how best to handle common problems with common resources."

■ **bi'as** (bī'as ) *n.* . . . 3. tendency or inclination; prejudice—**Syn.** see PREJUDICE. Obviously the editors at the *New York Times* know something the editors of *Webster's* don't. A recent *Times* headline for a story about how the Association of American Universities endorsed race preferences—i.e., prejudice—in college admissions read: "62 Top Colleges Endorse Bias in Admissions." The next day the *Times* ran a correction: " 'Bias,' as a term for affirmative action, was neither impartial nor accurate." Nor convenient. Nor polite. Nor designed to perpetuate official fictions. Therefore, the editors continued, "It should not have appeared." Which suggests another word the editors might acquaint themselves with: **Or·well'i·an** (ôr·wel'i·an), *adj.* 1. characterized by the twisting of the common meaning of words to suit cynical political purposes—**Syn.** see NEW YORK TIMES.

■ The media popularize the notion that most violent crime (robbery, rape, assault) committed by blacks is against other blacks. But recent National Crime Surveys conducted by the Justice Department show that, in fact, violent crime by blacks against whites is even more frequent. The racial reporting format was prompted by an article ("Is Violent Crime Intraracial?") by Dr. William Wilbanks in the journal *Crime and Delinquency* in 1985. Dr. Wilbanks recently discovered that the latest NCS report (*Criminal Victimization in the U.S., 1993*) dropped the key table on "choice of victim"—not, the Justice Department claims, because of political pressure, but Wilbanks and others are skeptical. Better to publish politically correct data than data that are—correct.

■ It's a race which will return first—the Hale–Bopp comet, or Republican backbone.

## Children's Crusade

DEFEATING the Clintons' health plan was the GOP's most significant domestic accomplishment, albeit a negative one, since the Kemp–Roth tax cuts of 1981. As with Kemp–Roth, however, some Republicans have moved swiftly to undercut the accomplishment. Sen. Orrin Hatch (R., Utah), aspiring to be the Dick Darman of health care, has introduced a bill with Ted Kennedy to provide health insurance for children—the very "Kidcare" proposal conservatives feared the Clintons would present as a fallback position in 1994.

Sen. Hatch and his newfound friends in the press have been assiduously promoting the bill as "moderate to conservative." The senator denies, for instance, that it creates a new federal entitlement; indeed, the bill has language saying, in essence, This is not an entitlement. But the bill also stipulates that "all eligible children" must be covered and that the program will be outside the normal budget process—which sounds a lot like an entitlement to us. As Lincoln said: How many legs does a dog have, if you call a tail a leg? The answer: Four—because calling a tail a leg doesn't make it one.

The financing of the program is smoke and mirrors. The revenue raised by cigarette taxes will decline every year along with the number of smokers. Since discouraging smoking is part of the point of such taxes, that decline will be all the steeper. There is no reason, on the other hand, to think that the program's spending would decline, and every reason to think the program would expand to cover more groups and more services. Congress has historically found it harder to drop its bad habits than most smokers have.

Hatch–Kennedy is supposedly enlightened federalism, with the states running the program. It would be more accurate to say that the states would administer it, while the federal Department of Health and Human Services called the shots. HHS would pass judgment on each state's system, define what is and is not a "reasonable" eligibility requirement, and eventually set the formula for distributing funds among the states. The bill includes at least thirty mandates on states that "voluntarily" participate; states that opted out would, in effect, be sending tax dollars to the participants via the Federal Government. Participating states would have to expand abortion funding—and federal funds might be used for this purpose. The National Right to Life Committee also warns that funding of assisted suicide is a real possibility.

Utah's other Republican senator, Bob Bennett, has dropped his support for the bill, complaining privately that Hatch misrepresented it; other senators still listed as co-sponsors make similar complaints. Majority Whip Don Nickles (R., Okla.) has been bold—astonishingly so, given his position—in educating his colleagues about Hatch–Kennedy's defects. But there are many other Kidcare proposals abroad in Washington, and liberals clearly intend to make it their cause of the year.

There appear to be more than three million chronically uninsured children in America, and perhaps three times as many have no insurance for part of the year. (That does not mean they are untreated.) Many are eligible for Med-

### *Starr's Big Chill*

*Concealment was a word he used;*
*Destruction was another.*
*Intimidation, too, appeared—*
*Thank God Bill Clinton's mother*
*Was not around to see the list.*
*I read it while I did the Twist.*

—W. H. VON DREELE



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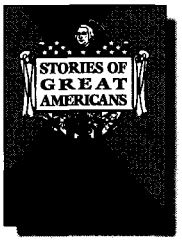
# HAVE YOU BEEN LOOKING FOR GOOD BOOKS FOR YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT




## History?

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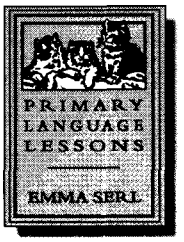


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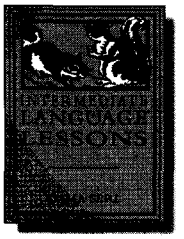

by Emma Serl

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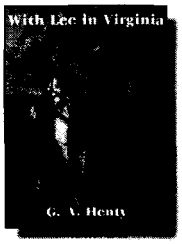

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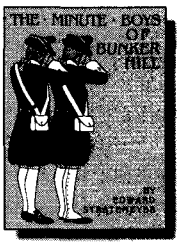

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icaid, and the reasons they do not get it are obscure. These children have a special claim on our sympathy, but their problem is not special. Children lack insurance for the same reasons as adults: under the employer-based system created by the government, individuals do not own or control their own insurance policies, and state-mandated benefits raise insurance costs too high for many.

The solution to these problems is to move toward free-market health care. Allowing anyone to open a tax-free medical savings account would be a good start.

## Bad Chemistry

ON April 24, the Senate approved the Chemical Weapons Convention by 74 to 26. The 26 nays were Republicans—but so were 29 of the ayes. A valiant campaign against the CWC, led by Sens. Jesse Helms and Jon Kyl, was doomed when Majority Leader Trent Lott forced the treaty out of committee, authorized a negotiation over various "understandings," and endorsed the treaty personally on the afternoon of the vote. The elated Administration hailed it as an example of bi-partisan "working together"; Republicans licked their wounds over the split in their ranks that permitted ratification of one of the most worthless (and mischievous) agreements ever signed in the name of arms control.

What does the CWC vote mean for two other arms-control treaties expected to come before the Senate soon? One is the Comprehensive Test Ban treaty, banning all nuclear tests, even for safety and reliability. The other is the "demarcation" agreement reached between Presidents Clinton and Yeltsin at Helsinki in March, which would limit the scope of theater missile defenses under the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty. The missile-defense accord is the more significant—and the one on which the Republicans have the best chance to unite. After all, missile defense is part of the GOP canon—it was in the Contract with America. Opposition to the "demarcation" accord will also unite Reaganite true believers in missile defense with Bushites who are appalled that Clinton has, either by agreement with the Russians or unilaterally, limited the capabilities of U.S. systems even for theater defense—while denying that he is doing so. For Sen. Lott to pull the same stunt on missile defense as on CWC would be a spectacular betrayal of party and principle.

## Cant Delivery Devices

A U.S. district judge ruled that the Food and Drug Administration had the power to regulate tobacco products, as drug-delivery devices intended to deliver nicotine. The ruling came a week after it was reported that the nation's two largest tobacco companies were negotiating a deal whereby they would accept government regulation and pay $250 billion over the next 25 years to states and individuals to cover health-care costs, in return for protection against lawsuits.

The war against tobacco will continue to evolve, if only because America's trial lawyers will not accept any deal that forestalls their injury lawsuits. "There is no need for deals here," said David Kessler, former head of the FDA. "The world has shifted under [the industry's] feet and they have little leverage."

What has been shifting under everyone's feet, allowing zealots like Kessler to flourish, has been our understanding of individual responsibility. Critiques of tobacco as dirty and evil are as old as tobacco. (One of the earliest was issued by King James I.) The first surgeon general's report showing a link between cigarettes and lung cancer appeared in 1964. The knowledge that smoking is un-

## *The Vision of Bill Clinton*

His *Titan's* efforts now deserve a rest,
But *Clinton* thinks instead of his bequest:
What though, near greatness, he the *Dole* did thrash?
Or labored mightily to raise more cash?
Or manned the *White House* phones around the clock
To touch friends from *Peking* to *Little Rock*?
To rest upon such laurels were no shame,
But *Bill* won't duck (nor would this duck be lame)
The call of *Destiny* to enter in
Those sacred precincts, dedicate to *Spin*.
Already scarcely less than *Morris*, he
To crown his works needs but the *GOP*
To join him, though reluctantly, on stage,
As when they helped him raise the min'mum wage.

"O *Goddess Spin*!" cried *Bill*, "how to my side
May I tempt those I've charged with granny-cide?"
And straight he saw *Republicans* en masse
Who'd join him if he outlawed poison gas
(Or signed a paper bidding it be gone
From everywhere as from the *Pentagon*).
"It's brilliant, *Goddess*; what a happy thought!
Who can resist? At any rate not *Lott*!"
And thus, he sees, the tide of cant o'erwhelms
His foes—bar *Mack* and *Kyl* and *Gramm* and *Helms*.
But now a vision greater still appears;
He calls a "summit" praising "volunteers"
With all the Presidents of one accord
(At least he's sure of *Carter*, *Bush*, and *Ford*)—
And *Nancy Reagan* too will acquiesce
And bring a killer sound-bite: "Just say yes!"
"Yes! Yes! They'll hate it, but they'll feign delight;
Thank heaven now for those damned 'points of light'!
So *Powell* will stifle laggards' strangled squeaks
And *Rush* (on cue) will fulminate for weeks.
O *Spin Goddess*! Much thanks for this advice.
With thee I now ascend *Spin Paradise*!"

—JUVENAL



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## *Our Senate Majority*

*Excuse me, but I thought we'd won.*
*When Beauregard chalked up Bull Run,*
*The Yankees fled like scalded cats.*
*How come Trent treats the Democrats*
*As if they'd stormed the halls in waves,*
*Then sold his women off as slaves?*

—W. H. VON DREELE

healthy has been available for a long time. Tobacco companies of course downplay that knowledge in their advertisements. But the world is full of conflicting testimony on all manner of topics. (Gays—and the Federal Government—have said for years that heterosexuals were equally at risk from AIDS.) You pays your money and you takes your choice.

The anti-smoking crusade also misrepresents the nature of addiction. Addictions may be powerful; they are not unbreakable. Millions of people have quit smoking, by all sorts of devices, from the patch to cold turkey. Even as Joe Camel does not "force" anyone to smoke, the habit, once acquired, does not "force" smokers to keep smoking.

It may be that America, founded by Puritans, must sustain a constant level of puritanism. If it is driven away from one area, then it must be displaced onto another. Anyone can sell triple-X videos—so long as there is no cigarette machine on the premises.

# NOTES & ASIDES

■ Dear Bill:

After nearly nine years on the Hill, I thought I had, at one time or the other, read or heard the most ridiculous comments ever uttered. (You need only spend one hour with the *Congressional Record*.)

But I think I've found one that gets the yearly prize.

On the eve of the House vote on "family planning" the president of the Audubon Society weighed in.

In his letter to members of Congress, Audubon President John Flicker declared, "National Audubon Society wishes to remind you that we approach population growth as one of the most critical environmental issues threatening the survival of birds and their habitat."

Pretty good, eh?

Warmly,
Tim [Goeglein]
Washington, D.C.

Dear Tim: Yes, pretty good; pretty awful. Cordially,
WFB

## ■ L. Brent Bozell, RIP

BRENT Bozell was a seminal figure in the early days of NATIONAL REVIEW. As an undergraduate at Yale he was renowned as a debater and orator (he had won the National American Legion Oratory award in 1944, and at Yale was president of the Political Union). His post-college years (as an undergraduate he was my closest friend; he married my sister Patricia in our senior year) were crowded and exciting. He graduated from the Yale Law School in 1953 and moved to California anticipating a career in the law. During his law-school days he collaborated with me in writing *McCarthy and His Enemies*, a study of McCarthy's activities up through the Tydings hearings in 1953. Soon after the book's publication, Edward Bennett Williams, serving as attorney for Joe McCarthy, persuaded Brent to detach himself from Pillsbury Madison & Sutro in San Francisco and help defend McCarthy against censure by the Senate.

The defense failed, but Brent and McCarthy had become friends, and McCarthy asked Brent to stay in Washington and write speeches for him part time. Brent did, and in the years ahead became close to Sen. Barry Goldwater. Retired Notre Dame dean Clarence Manion had set up a small publishing company and commissioned Brent to write a short book for Sen. Goldwater. In nine days, Brent (normally slow) wrote *The Conscience of a Conservative*. It had the largest sale of any polemic in American history. Its popularity contributed to Goldwater's nomination for President in 1964.

While working for McCarthy and for Goldwater, Brent served as Washington correspondent for NATIONAL REVIEW and as a Senior Editor. He competed twice for public office, once for the House of Delegates in Maryland, once for Congress. In 1960, he moved his family to Spain, intending to write a thorough examination of the Supreme Court under Earl Warren (*The Warren Revolution* was published in 1966 by Arlington House). While in Spain he felt the need to found a magazine devoted to Catholic thought. In 1965, the monthly *Triumph* was first published. It was a profound venture, theocratical in orientation, in one sense another expression of the totalist tendencies of the culture of the 1960s. In 1975 it discontinued, Brent Bozell's creeping invalidism a factor in its demise, as also the gradual reconsolidation, during that decade, of conventions cast off during the abandon of the earlier decade. *Triumph* was in a sense the counterpart of Woodstock. The one argued the imperative of the licentious, self-indulgent lifestyle; the other, the ultimate satisfactions of faith, duty, and fidelity.

The personal story was searingly and poignantly told at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the Dominican church close by Catholic University in Washington, D.C., where eight priests, including the priest who had married the Bozells in 1949, concelebrated a funeral Mass presided over by Father Michael Bozell, a Benedictine monk who was ordained a priest at Solesmes in France in 1994. The eulo-



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gists were two of Brent's six sons. The story was told by Brent Bozell III, well known as president of the Media Research Center and as a syndicated columnist.

YOUNG Brent spoke of receiving a letter while at college from "Pop," as he was known to his children, saying lightheartedly that he hoped never to be a burden to them. "Shortly after that letter arrived, Pop's behavior became erratic, nonsensical, and when finally he was hospitalized came the shattering diagnosis: manic depression.

"Dozens of times over the next 25 years the attacks would come, and with each bout, yet another blow, yet another public humiliation. He would lose Montejurra, the home in the foothills of the Shenandoah mountains which he loved so much. He could only watch helplessly as *Triumph* magazine, to whose survival he had given every ounce of energy, collapsed. There were the seemingly endless searches around the country just to locate him; in fact, around the world, as he brought on one crisis after another. There were arrests and forced hospitalizations, escapes and re-arrests and recommitments. There was the never-ending parade of lawyers, police, doctors, and, yes, from time to time the State Department was on the line to brief us on yet another prospective international upheaval caused by this very unpredictable man."

The mourners in the packed church listened attentively. Some hadn't known how ill Brent was. "Manic depression by itself is enough to break the spirit of any man, but Pop was no ordinary man. He suffered from peripheral neuropathy, sleep apnea, osteoporosis, degenerative disk disease, asthma, and Alzheimer's. One by one they came, and when it seemed that no part of his body had been left untouched yet a new illness was diagnosed. We wondered how he could endure so much, accept this torture with such nobility, with never one word of complaint."

The eulogist, searching for an explanation, came up with a passage from his father's book *Mustard Seeds*. "There is no greater paradox in the cosmos," the deceased had written, "than the apparent contradiction of our helplessness ('without me, you can do nothing') alongside God's 'helplessness.' Oh, I know, God is all-powerful, and so on; but he cannot undo what he has done, and what he once did was to make men free. This means that he 'needs' us in order to get us to Heaven as his lovers, and in order to do his will in the world. All we have to do in order to frustrate those wishes—to render God 'helpless'—is to say No. But God is not helpless, really, because he has mercy—himself. And what mercy does is convert, change our hearts. Which God never stops trying to do until we are dead. This means continued suffering for him, which is what Christ is all about."

Young Brent headed home with his eulogy. "Love, mercy, suffering. Those became the three pillars in a remarkable spiritual journey that would transform Pop from a good man to a truly holy man in his final days. It is said that a saint never aspires to that status except by abandoning himself completely to Christ and his suffering; if so, then Pop was saintly. Ask his friends, his brother and sister, his nephews and nieces, his extended family, so many of them here today, how that man could pierce the soul with such beauty, such warmth, such dignity, such friendship. Ask his ten children, who undertook that 'burden' he prophesied, a small price to pay to savor one more hour his wisdom and disarming wit. Ask his queen, his Juliet. No two ever loved more fiercely. Mom, your heart is heavy now, but let it also be joyful. He is where he is meant to be, and that is good. And just as you whispered in his ear, in those final days, that he would never be alone, he now whispers back in yours that he's still with you, will always be with you."

"Little Brent," as the eulogist is referred to by the senior members of the family, was in the room with his father when he died. Indeed all ten children were there. Little Brent closed by saying that his father was now "finally to be placed at the feet of his Creator, who will beckon him forward with his Song of Songs,

*Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!*
*For see, the winter is past,*
*the rains are over and gone.*
*The flowers appear on the earth,*
*the time of pruning the vines has come,*
*and the song of the dove is heard in our land. . . .*
*Arise, my beloved, my beautiful one, and come!"*

**—WFB**

*Brent Bozell and classmate, at Yale Political Union, 1954, defending their book* McCarthy and His Enemies.



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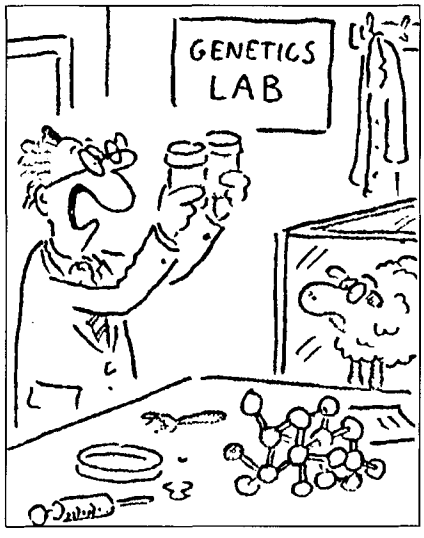
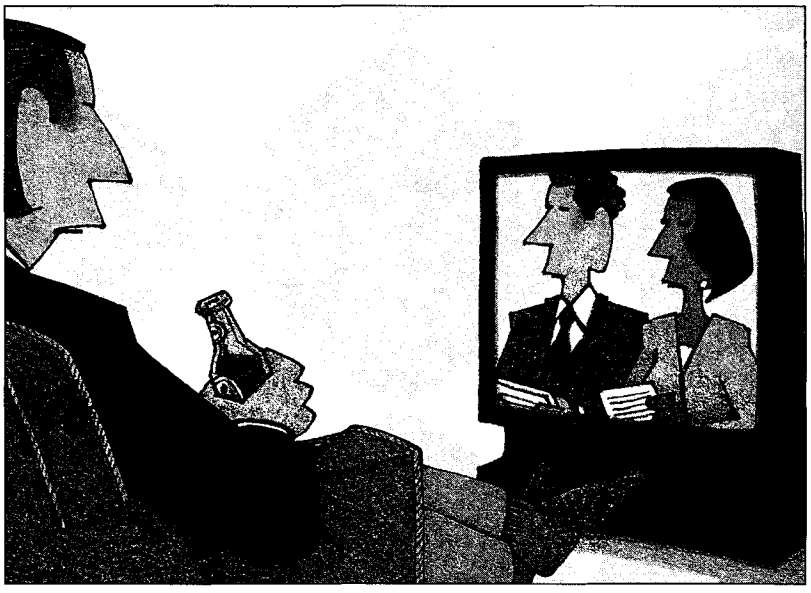
# help!!!!




*"Eureka! I've cloned mint jelly."*

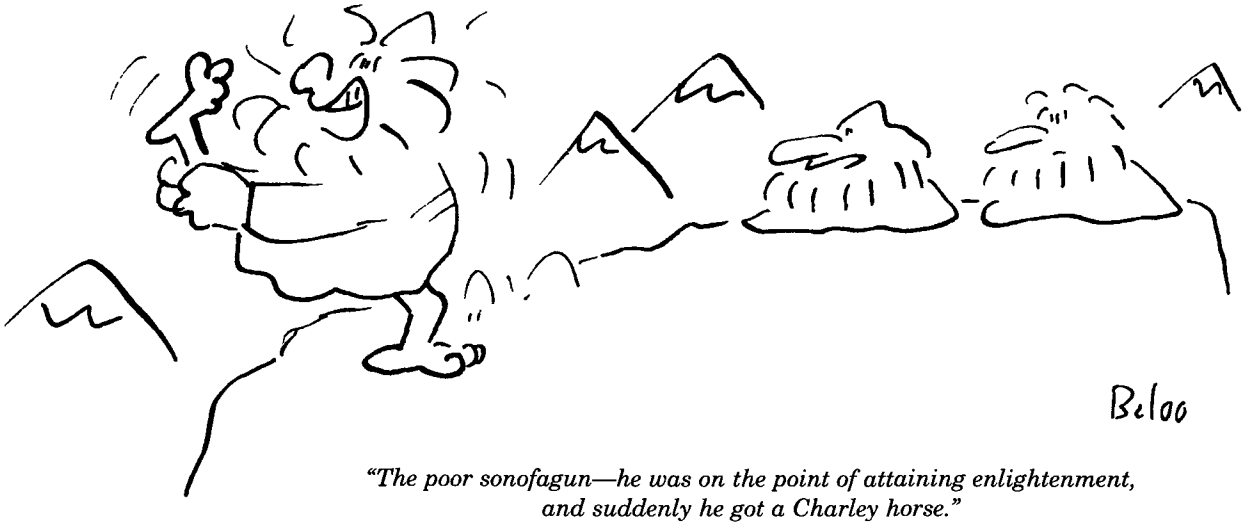


*"And now* News Tonight, *with Rob Fitzpatrick and Ellen Grayson. Inspired by real events."*

## *Inevitable Al*

*Mr. Gore seemed assured as the swallows*
*Capistrano applauds in the spring,*
*Or the hippos in seasonal wallows*
*When the mud offers males a new zing;*
*But with Buddhists in tow as the bubbly ran low,*
*He makes do with The Toast of Peking.*

—W. H. VON DREELE




*"The poor sonofagun—he was on the point of attaining enlightenment, and suddenly he got a Charley horse."*



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GOP
I REALLY NEED TO GET OUT MORE.



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# CAPITAL SCENE

## Child's Play

RAMESH PONNURU

Roman Genn

WASHINGTON, D.C.

A LOT of parents of small children received good news on the morning of April 4. "Day Care Study Offers Reassurance to Working Parents," ran the *Washington Post* headline. *USA Today* had the same story ("Day care not harmful to growth or bonding"), and a quote from the study's coordinator, Sarah Friedman: "These are heartwarming findings." If parents tuned in to ABC's *Good Morning America*, they could catch Joan Lunden interviewing Dr. Friedman. Or they could see her on CNN (introduced with, "Here's some good news . . .").

These stories were based on a press release the previous day by the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development. The *Post* summarized it this way: "As a group, children in day care learn to think and talk just as well as those cared for by their mothers. . . . [but] the quality of care matters." All the stories dutifully noted these revelations; the *New York Times* ran a story taken straight from the press release.

The study, like the report on an earlier phase of the research publicized a year before, was not published in a scientific journal. The press release said that its findings would be presented at a child-development conference on the afternoon of the 4th (i.e., after the wave of uncritical press accounts). Even then, no paper was presented; the results were simply posted on a wall. It took five days for the skeptics at the indispensable Statistical Assessment Service (STATS), which monitors media misuses of data, to obtain the research.

When they did, it turned out that most of these kids in "non-maternal care" weren't in what most people think of as day care at all: their fathers or grandmothers were taking care of them. And while previous research indicated that problems set in for children who spend more than twenty hours a week in care, this study lumped kids below the threshold with others above it. "It's science by press release," complains STATS research director David Murray. That did not stop Hillary Rodham Clinton from devoting a column to the subject: "Here is some news that should bring peace of mind to millions of parents. . . ."

Two weeks later, the First Lady presided over a White House Conference on the Brain designed to promote early-childhood education, long a hobbyhorse of the Left. What's new is that the familiar claims about the importance of such education to cognitive development are now being treated as a neuroanatomical fact. The argument, in brief, is that a child's environment can help or hinder the explosive growth of dendrites and axons in the brain that takes place in the first three years. If the child does not interact enough in these early years, the damage to his brain structure, and thus his mental potential, can't be undone later. Hence the need for "enriched environments" and "Early Head Start" programs.

A full-fledged media campaign is now under way. On April 28, ABC aired a special, "I Am Your Child," produced by Rob Reiner, hosted by Tom Hanks, and starring Robin Williams, Whitney Houston, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and other brain scientists. (Reiner also addressed the National Governors' Association. Think of it as "Meathead's revenge.") The same week, *Newsweek* published a special issue on "Your Child," featuring a concluding essay allegedly by Mrs. Clinton. "I've never seen a media campaign so well put together," marvels Murray. The main player is the Families and Work Institute, which is underwritten by the usual suspects in the foundation world—MacArthur, Heinz, Carnegie, etc. The campaign has also enlisted the support of the American Library Association, American Association of Pediatricians, American Public Welfare Association, and other groups.

Where is all this leading? To a senior Republican staffer in the House, "It's just an excuse to spend another trillion dollars on a Head Start program that doesn't work." No doubt the First Lady, given her druthers, would have grander ambitions. Liberals have tried for years, usually at the state level, to professionalize day care with licensure. In her day-care column, Mrs. Clinton wrote, "Too many child-care workers are undervalued, underpaid, and undertrained." When they're paid and trained according to liberal specifications, most families probably won't be able to afford them any more; the government will have to step in with generous subsidies.

*Most of these kids in 'non-maternal' care weren't in day care at all: their fathers or grandmothers were taking care of them.*

But the argument is full of holes. In a forthcoming paper, McDonnell Foundation president John Bruer points out that the notion that age three is the point of no return is largely based on experiments on rats and monkeys. By three, rhesus monkeys are sexually mature. A three-year-old human, on the other hand, really isn't ready to start dating. In addition, to jump from the

*Mr. Ponnuru is NR's national reporter.*



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fact that extreme sensory deprivation retards brain development to the conclusion that slight changes in sensory stimulation will affect it is a simple non-sequitur—one encouraged by use of the phrase "enriched environments," with its connotations for yuppies of tickets to the *Nutcracker*. Says Murray, "You must not make the leap that people living in Detroit or on the Anacostia river [in D.C.] are deprived in this sense because they're playing stickball in the street instead of taking Montessori classes. We don't know."

Neuroanatomical research probably does furnish an extra reason to remove infants from environments in which they are seriously neglected or abused. But it's pretty clear that most American kids have a greater need for reform of K–12, and particularly of middle schools. Indeed, the focus on early childhood has traditionally been part of the education establishment's diversionary bag of tricks, designed to elicit public acquiescence in the expansion rather than reform of failed institutions (see also: remedial programs). Furthermore, early-childhood programs are very expensive, which in the world of education policy is often an argument *for* a program: costs represent constituencies (see also: "whole-language" instruction).

For most kids, the neuroanatomical evidence points toward pro-family conclusions. No amount of regulation will make adults, whatever the distractions, coo at or talk to or hold infants; parental love does. Rockford Institute president Allan Carlson points out that an intact family and breast feeding appear to aid brain development significantly. "If it's the child's mental development [that] we're really interested in," he says, "we ought to be looking at the need of children for their mothers." (One might add that we should also prevent their developing brains from being sucked out by an abortionist.)

Instead, Carlson and others fear, the groundwork is being laid for another push for federal child-care legislation. Only state-supported experts know how children should be raised, the experts tell us; parents will be cozened into surrendering their authority in increments. Of course, each erosion will be presented as a way to help families. It's an old story, says Carlson: "In the name of the family, replace the family."

That's a worst-case scenario. Republican pollster Kellyanne Fitzpatrick presents the best one: "I don't expect a plan to come out of this. I expect child care and day care to be added to the mix of buzzwords the Clintons use to define themselves." It's an extension of Bill Clinton's campaign strategy on values. On the V-chip, school uniforms, and teen smoking, he played to common parental fears. On day care, his Administration assuages common parental guilt by providing rationalizations. In all cases, the ideological project is to relegitimate government for the middle class despite a political climate uncongenial to its expansion.

Children are, in other words, to be the entering wedge for big government. Four years ago, Clinton's health-care task force contemplated health insurance for children as a fallback plan. "Kids First," said one memo, "is really a precursor to the new system." Now a variety of Kidcare proposals are circulating on Capitol Hill, some authored by the very Republicans who blocked Clinton's bigger health plan in 1994. Miss Fitzpatrick explains, "They're worried about being against a five-year-old chemotherapy patient in Bill Clinton's arms in the Rose Garden."

Don't expect the infantilization of politics to end any time soon. Another White House conference, on child care, is planned for the fall. □

# Corporate Welfare Queens

STEPHEN MOORE

Jeff Fisher

WASHINGTON, D.C.

IN A recent interview with ABC's John Stossel, Dwayne Andreas, the chairman of Archer Daniels Midland, glibly proclaimed that despite the hundreds of thousands of dollars that he and ADM had stashed into Bob Dole's campaign coffers over the years, ADM had "never, ever, ever" sought political favors from Dole. If this implausible claim were true, then ADM shareholders should be relieved: for the first time in thirty years, there's no Senator Ethanol on Capitol Hill for Andreas to spend money not seeking political favors from.

In the real world, Dole's departure is only one reason for ADM's stockholders to feel jittery. Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Archer announced in January that the $500 million in annual ethanol subsidies is "one of the programs I would very much like to see removed this year." Add to that ADM's commodity price-fixing scandal, which ended in convictions last year, and the ethanol empire that generates almost 10 per cent of ADM's profits appears to be on the verge of crumbling.

The $12.7-billion company has other lucrative relationships with the federal Treasury that may also be endangered in the 105th Congress. ADM is one of the largest beneficiaries of federal sugar subsidies—in the form of guaranteed price supports that keep out foreign sugar and thus raise food prices. The General Accounting Office says that sugar price supports gouge consumers out of an estimated $1.4 billion a year in inflated food prices. More than $200 million of ADM's annual profits come from the production

*Congress typically rails indignantly against corporate welfare, but flinches when it comes time to make the cuts.*



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of government-protected high-fructose corn syrup. Last year Republican Rep. Dan Miller of Florida came within five votes on the House floor of ending Uncle Sam's role of Sugar Daddy. Matt Kibbe, formerly Rep. Miller's chief of staff and now with Citizens for a Sound Economy, predicts that this year "we could well have the votes" to push Big Sugar off the dole once and for all.

What's going on here? Is the 105th Congress finally poised to attack the seemingly impenetrable fortress of corporate welfare in the federal budget? If history is any guide, the answer is no. Congress typically rails indignantly against corporate handouts, but flinches when it comes time to make the cuts. The 104th Congress did little in this regard. Of the $65 billion per year in direct grants, loans, and insurance that Washington parcels out to big business, only about 10 per cent was shaved. As one senior House leadership aide explains matter-of-factly: "There's a general reluctance on the part of Republicans to take on a constituency that is regarded as our own."

Yet this deference to K Street's corporate muscle may be waning. Republicans have been so embarrassed by their meager efforts in the 104th Congress that many members are showing a renewed courage. Freshman Sen. Sam Brownback of Kansas (ironically, Bob Dole's replacement) correctly says that Republicans ought to be willing to "cut as much out of corporate welfare this year as we did last year from social welfare." Brownback insists that cutting direct business aid and using that money to pay for a capital-gains tax cut, small-business tax relief, and other measures will do far more to improve the competitiveness of U.S. industry than the aid itself has done.

In the House, Budget Committee Chairman John Kasich has formed a one-man crusade against "welfare for the well-off." In February he formed the Stop Corporate Welfare Coalition, an eclectic group that runs across the political spectrum, from Grover Norquist on the Right to Ralph Nader on the Left.

Kasich's coalition has already slated a "dirty dozen" of corporate subsidies for extinction, starting with the Department of Agriculture's repugnant Market Access Program. MAP funnels federal tax dollars to a who's who of U.S. agribusinesses for advertising their products in Japan, Singapore, and other nations across the globe—products such as Pillsbury baked goods, California raisins, Campbell soups, Dole (the company, not the former senator) lemons, Ralston Purina cat food, Beef Jerky, Ernest and Julio Gallo beaujolais and chardonnay, and on and on.

Federal assistance to the high-technology industry also may be placed on the chopping block. The Department of Commerce's Advanced Technology Program sends out fat lottery checks each year to such impoverished companies as AT&T ($34 million), Boeing ($50.9 million), General Electric ($14.5 million), and Chevron ($8.1 million). The money ostensibly funds cutting-edge research and product development. The theory is that government bureaucrats can pick winners more effectively than private capital markets can.

The energy industry is feeling particularly under siege. Big oil is not just a major recipient of ATP and defense dollars, but is also the recipient of billions in cut-rate loans and risk insurance on exports and overseas investments, via the Export–Import Bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corp. Mr. Kasich lusts to see both exterminated. OPIC's biggest customers in 1995 included Amoco, Citicorp, Coca-Cola, Duracel, Exxon, Texaco, and Union Carbide. The Ex–Im Bank spends $800 million a year underwriting the exports of Boeing, General Electric, Westinghouse, and Enron Corporation.

Republicans might expect their Democratic colleagues and the White House to be eager to join this crusade, but in fact the Democrats are less interested in cutting industry aid than in raising corporate taxes. The Clinton budget has a two-page laundry list of more than $40 billion in "corporate loophole closings" over five years. The prospect that the Clinton Administration's business tax hikes will be approved this year is slim, however. Bill Archer reflects the opinion of most of his House GOP colleagues when he says, "We didn't come to town to raise taxes on business." Ways and Means Committee sources say that a reasonable upper limit on corporate loophole closings that might be passed this session would amount to about $2 to $4 billion a year—and this would be used to offset business tax incentives, such as capital-gains relief.

How will all this affect bottom lines? Archer Daniels Midland, Washington's corporate-welfare queen, could find its profit margins severely squeezed if its peculiarly cozy relationship with Congress were severed. The same could be true for Boeing, Northrop Grumman, and other major defense contractors. Is there more military pork to cut from the budget? "Oh, heavens yes," responds John Kasich without hesitation.

Yet for most firms, even if all their federal aid suddenly vanished, it's not clear that, on balance, investors would suffer much. The $65 billion a year of corporate pork is a lot of money, but these funds are spread among thousands of firms. And fortunately, outside of defense contractors and ADM, most firms don't rely on Congress as their primary customer. Even for those with their snouts sunk deepest in the public trough, these funds are rarely more than 2 or 3 per cent of corporate revenues.

In fact a growing number of business leaders are urging Congress to pull the plug on industry entitlements. Back in 1994, T. J. Rodgers, president of Cypress Semiconductor in Silicon Valley, told a stunned congressional committee that "high-tech subsidies hurt my company and the semiconductor industry. Why? Because they represent tax-and-spend economics. And tax-and-spend economics is a proven failure. If Congress wants to help American high technology, handouts are the wrong way to go. Better to leave us alone."

The legions of K Street corporate lobbyists, whose jobs truly depend on the corporate welfare state's surviving intact, violently disagree. Wall Street investors should not. □

*"You have just one more wish. Are you sure you want* another *belly-rub?"*

*Mr. Moore is director of fiscal-policy studies at the Cato Institute.*



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# ON THE SCENE

## African Realities

TOM STACEY

Frederick H. Carlson

KINSHASA/KAMPALA/BAMAKO

AS I write, a territory the size of continental Europe, namely Zaïre, has imploded amid suffering too vast to measure and confusion too tangled to unravel. As this implosion was beginning, America's First Lady was engaged upon a tour of six black African states that were deemed worthy of such a visit: Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Uganda, and Eritrea—a peculiar assortment, not least in the light of Hillary Clinton's stated hope that her peregrination would "underscore" the importance the United States places on democracy in Africa.

Before she set forth, Mrs. Clinton said America's commitment must be assessed "not just in aid, dollars, and humanitarian effort in the wake of tragedy and crisis, but in the democratic values we reinforce, in the human rights we defend, in the conflicts we help preventatively."

*Mr. Stacey is a former Chief Foreign Correspondent of the (London)* Sunday Times, *a novelist and publisher, and appointed guardian of the Bakonzo tribe of the Rwenzori mountains.*

Brightly she roamed, as Eleanor Roosevelt brightly roamed Stalinist Russia, and brightly she returned having learned—it is reasonable to suppose—not very much beyond the contents of her own wishful little speeches commending South Africa's efforts to "build a multi-racial democracy," Zimbabwe's gestures at family planning, the Rwanda "War Crimes Tribunal" conducted by the UN in Tanzania, and what she chose to call "democracy" in Uganda, a "workshop" in Eritrea, and a village in Senegal where "grass-roots efforts are under way to train citizens about the institutions of democracy."

By now, Mrs. Clinton will probably have read the extraordinary speech that Yoweri Museveni, President of Uganda, gave at the United Nations in February. Museveni declared that "the situation in Africa has never been better than now for the last five hundred years. The situation is excellent. The problems you hear of in Zaïre, Burundi, Rwanda, Sudan . . . they are problems on the retreat." He was then daring enough to remind his audience that in 1965 Uganda was "more prosperous than South Korea, and Nigeria more prosperous than Indonesia."

The date the speaker chose, 1965, was respectively three and four years after Britain had ceded independence to Uganda and Nigeria, in conditions of rising prosperity, civil stability, administrative probity, and high hopes. But Mr. Museveni knew what had gone wrong in Africa in the intervening decades. This was "mismanagement." All that the countries of Africa now required to come into line with the success of their Asian counterparts was, he said, "democracy" (a criterion that might surprise the citizens of Indonesia). Museveni defined democracy as "participation, the rule of law, human rights, accountability, transparency in government, and regular free and fair elections."

Presumably, were Nigeria to enjoy these elusive blessings it would not be enduring per capita GDP of $330. Nor would its corruption and crime be so appalling as to oblige the U.S. to embargo flights there by American airlines because of what was termed rather daintily "ineffective security" and "endemic extortion by law-enforcement and immigration officials." Nor would the winner of its last attempt at a genuine election, Chief Abiola, be lying sick in jail, nor its most famous writer, the Nobel Laureate Wole Soyinka, be arraigned on a charge of "treason" for criticizing the current military tyranny.

And who was doing the talking? Mr. Museveni has been responsible for Uganda for 11 years. He has just played host to Hillary Clinton. He is as pivotal a figure as one could wish through whom to interpret the current crisis and the unconfessed realities of black Africa.

Museveni is himself a dictator in all but name. He won power in 1986 at the head of a guerrilla army. Uganda had by then endured two decades of extravagant misrule. The suffering survivors of the Amin period and the second Obote regime were glad of stability at almost any cost—and the cost proved high indeed for such as the Acholi in the north and the Teso in the east at the hands of Museveni's bestial soldiery.

But worse was going on elsewhere in Africa, and Uganda's uniformed savagery escaped international exposure. Museveni meanwhile was establishing administrative coherence through a system of local committees loyal to his National Resistance Movement.

He "banned" political parties, on the grounds that multi-party politics is unmanageable at the present stage of African evolution (about which he may well have been right). What in fact he banned was all parties except his own, the NRM. Nonetheless, he claimed Uganda was a "democracy" in that every so often the people were asked to vote for their NRM local committee representatives, members of a "party-less" national assembly, and himself as president.

The young Museveni had grown up in long years of exile, partly in Tanzania, which in the early 1970s was under the influence of a pre-war brand of English socialism that was in the process of blighting Britain's post-colonial world. But once in power, he was swift to perceive a different reality. As the Cold War



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faded, aid had become the thing—from the International Monetary Fund, or the World Bank, or directly from donor countries to their African protégés.

Museveni proved himself admirably skilled at burnishing his international image. He had inherited a shambles. The sources of recovery lay in largesse from abroad and firm control at home. His political opponents fled—there are in London more refugees from Uganda than from any of the authenticated Commonwealth tyrannies. Several opponents met surprising deaths.

Yet prospective aid-givers, a little desperate for any figure in central Africa of even passable plausibility, were not to be deterred. In 1989, Mrs. Thatcher made Lady Chalker the chief dispenser of British aid. Something of an infatuation between the new minister and Museveni ensued. She championed him indefatigably in the forums of international aid. Museveni toed the aid-donors' economic line—more or less. Up shot Uganda's growth rate, at least on paper.

Today Kampala is stuffed with aid-funded Non-Governmental Organizations headed by high-earning foreigners. Museveni had welcomed back the Indian merchants whose expulsion in 1974 had brought Idi Amin such grass-roots popularity but critically damaged the economy. In the key sectors of agricultural commodities, distribution, banking, and retailing, Asians in Uganda are swiftly reasserting their dominance, as they have already done in Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, and Zambia.

Various of Museveni's ministers have grown impressively rich, owning properties abroad and at home, including Kampala premises built for the express purpose of leasing them at rewarding rents to the foreign NGOs. The aid flow has shown no signs of abating. America's ambassador in Kampala, Michael Southwick, commented last year, "We're betting on Museveni to the tune of $1 billion a year. That's some bet."

NOW Museveni is a Tutsi, and this fact is significant. When the colonial will evaporated in the 1950s, it was scarcely three generations since the carve-up of black Africa by the metropolitan powers of Europe. The effect of white authority everywhere had been to halt or distort the evolution of ethnic and racial ascendancies and dependencies that had been at work from ancient times among the peoples between the Sahara and the Limpopo.

Thus, for example, white rule in what became Southern Rhodesia (later Zimbabwe) broke the power and the will of the ascendant warrior people, the Matabele, and handed the dominance to their former vassals, the Mashona. In the pasturelands below Mount Kenya (a Masai word), the white man arrived to find the dark, Nilotic, pastoralist Masai masters of the scene among the humbler Bantu agriculturalist Kikuyu. But it was the Kikuyu who rose and multiplied (sixfold in as many decades) upon the benefits of the white man's medicine and plantations and education, and who thus seized power in the newly independent, white-invented republic in 1962.

In Zanzibar and along Africa's eastern shoreline, Africanized Arabs held sway as settled traders in gold, ivory, cloves, and slaves, producing the Arab-based lingua franca Swahili and a measure of Islamic civilization. The British snuffed out that power, and less than a century later, within two weeks of independence in December 1963, the Africans rose against their old masters and sent them fleeing for their lives to far, forgotten Oman—or, in the case of the Sultan of Zanzibar himself, to Portsea, England.

*Colonialism halted or distorted the evolution of ancient African ascendancies and dependencies.*

Westward in the highlands of Rwanda and Burundi, German and Belgian colonial power froze the aristocratic dominance of the minority Tutsi over the majority Hutu. Upon independence in 1961, the ballot box masquerading as democracy overturned the order of centuries by passing power to the Hutu. Mutual massacre ensued, and it repeatedly resumes vigorously and tragically. The departing Belgians opened their blood-spattered hands to expostulate, "What else were we to give them but the vote?"

The Tutsi are no ordinary tribe. They share the Bantu language of the Hutu, and for the most part are agriculturalists like them. But the Tutsi are a Nilotic people. They first came into the region from the north and east—Nile territory and beyond—with their long-horned cattle of reputed Asian provenance. The generally less able Hutu, with their simpler social structures, attributed to them a kind of fabulous historical right to rule. Museveni—or Yoweri Kaguta, to give him his Tutsi name—springs from the Hima branch of the Tutsi, straddling the Uganda border, among whom cattle-owning remains commonplace.

In Rwanda, after the first wave of massacres 33 years ago, the so-called intellectuals of the Hutu Akazu faction began to generate an hysterical campaign of hatred against the Tutsi, demanding their extinction. Loyal to their ancient practice of guerrilla warfare—once so testing to the first German colonists—the Tutsi formed the Rwanda Patriotic Front. Arms reached them in quantity from Uganda, and men too. The Hutu called in French military participation to protect them, and for a while they prevailed.

Then in 1994 came the simultaneous murder, in an aircraft on the tarmac, of the Hutu presidents of both Rwanda and Burundi. The first ordinary citizens to be chopped up in Rwanda were Tutsi by Hutu. Bodies tumbled down the rapids of the Kagera river into Lake Victoria. The world's press flooded in. The Tutsi became instantly the goodies and the Hutu the baddies.

Today, the Tutsi are back on top, with the power, the weapons, the international money. Paul Kagame, Museveni's former head of military intelligence, is now effectively the ruler of Rwanda. Hutu in their thousands fled into Zaïre and into Tanzania, where the War Crimes Tribunal was established.

The Hutu have meanwhile been dying daily in the hundreds from starvation and disease and at the hands of the Tutsi, whose adventurism has carried them into Zaïre. Of that vast country they now control more than half under the commissarship of Museveni's guerrilla placeman, Laurent-Désiré Kabila.

The victors in Zaïre's capital of Kinshasa will inherit a city ravaged by its own people. The principal ravager will of course have been President Mobuto, whom I first encountered on the streets of that city as a military policeman in July 1960. He has personally siphoned off an estimated $3 billion from his country's income since he seized power in 1965. Mobutu has ruined his country, as he dwindles away amid his useless fortune. Meanwhile the street ravagers will have been at work. Who will provide the framework for recovery?

Since the 1980s, America has been



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sucked into Africa by the Somali crisis, by fundamentalist Islam in Khartoum, and by the humanitarian crisis in Rwanda and Burundi. What the United States perceived with alarm in the Sudan was the government of General Bashir infecting Arab North Africa with Iranian-style fundamentalism. So, Bashir must be weakened.

*If the French pretend to work with phantoms of democracy they do it to fool others. They do not fool themselves.*

One way to achieve that was to pour money and weapons via Uganda into the hands of the black non-Muslim rebels of John Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Army. The United States has had its man, Roger Winter, scurrying between the South Sudan rebel theater and eastern Zaïre, funneling U.S. assistance in every form from the benign to the explosive. The SDLP now more or less controls for Museveni—and the U.S.—the entire fraught borderland between Uganda and Sudan, declared a "humanitarian crisis zone" by the UN.

Meanwhile, there are the French. They know their Africa. They are pushy, paternalistic, and intensely possessive toward their linguistic area, *la francophonie*, which now implicitly incorporates what was once Belgian—Zaïre, Rwanda, and Burundi. Their backing of the Hutu has misfired, at least for the present. Yet the French are on the scene, with their own white troops just across the river from Kinshasa in Brazzaville, others in Gabon, and another unit in Bangui (Central African Republic). They have more troops in Djibouti.

The French can afford to wait for the current U.S.-backed Tutsi assault across equatorial Africa to play itself out, while writing themselves in with a central role in whatever program is devised by the outside world to drag Zaïre back to at least a token coherence.

The French are the realists in sub-Saharan Africa. As a colonial power, their performance was pathetic compared to that of the British, in terms of infrastructure, education, medicine, and political evolution. But they deceived themselves far less than the British did about the ability of their charges to take over their own governance.

To a significant degree they stayed on in the back room. Nearly three decades after Mali's being granted independence I happened to fly into the capital, Bamako, on the Friday plane from Paris. On the same plane, I was to learn, came the regular Friday-night strongboxes containing the bank notes printed in the local currency which would pay the Malian civil service their week's wages on Saturday morning. The French still underwrite the local currencies of Benin, Togo, Niger, and Côte d'Ivoire.

They accept without dismay that whatever is to work in *la francophonie* must be supervised by themselves or the Lebanese or others from outside Africa. They function with a Gallic resignation amid the crime, poverty, disease, and constitutional illegitimacy which constitute the overwhelming reality of the black Africa that was once French or British or Spanish or Belgian or Portuguese or Italian. If they pretend to work with the phantoms of democracy and progress, they do it to fool others, notably the United States. They do not fool themselves.

THE prime characteristic of black African polity is despair. An unspoken conviction of the impossibility of the task in the shorter or longer term underlies the cynicism, the incompetence, the cruelty, venality, and futility that prevail across the continent. None of this is the consequence of past colonization, which in turn was as much the consequence of indigenous self-perception as of the outsider's will.

When centuries ago the Tutsi pushed south with their cattle, the Hutu yielded. There was no instance where the Bantu did not yield in encounter with the Nilotic. Zaïre is overwhelmingly Bantu, yet President Mobutu's prime minister at the time of the Tutsi invasion (who has subsequently disappeared, allegedly with vast funds), was himself a Tutsi (and half Polish in blood). What has lately become the most successful country in western Africa, Ghana, cheerfully accepts rule by a half-caste Scotsman, Jerry Rawlings. Arabs and their Islam, with its unforgiving certainties and elementary disciplines, are pushing down relentlessly into the pagan and quasi-Christian heart of the continent. Sharp, persistent, watchful South Asians have gathered into their hands most of the homegrown business in eastern and central Africa. In South Africa, as early as the 1960s, the inner circles of Afrikanerdom were working on the premise that power would effectively return to the whites—if ever it effectively left them. Their sense is not and was not, in the first place, that this is what they seek, so much as what the blacks will expect and require of them.

South Africa may have to endure for a while the ignominy of those more northerly states where central government accepts the ineffectuality of its writ and where businessmen and traders pay the wages of a local militia to protect their factories, stores, or mineral assets and keep the roads open to the ports and airports. But over the years it will evolve a "Brazilian" racial balance and, with its satellites Namibia and Botswana, come to dominate half the continent.

By then the presumption of the automatic right of the indigenous to govern their own territories will have been swept away by the sheer tragedy of "mismanagement" (Museveni's term), by the poverty and misery which already give black Africa 9 million of the world's 13 million victims of AIDS and 29 out of the world's 42 poorest countries.

America will suddenly see this, as it will suddenly see the absurdity of its pursuit of the rainbow of "liberal" Western democracy for societies to which it is profoundly unsuited. Everywhere such "democracy" will have been essayed in black Africa, it will have faltered, and far from ameliorating the African political despair will have compounded it, in the same way that independence from the colonial powers a generation and a half ago did not dissolve the suspicion of being unable to compete successfully, but inflamed it. For "democratic" multipartyism means little else but multi-tribalism, which is hardly the point, and one man, one vote leads to little else but clientelism, which is current jargon for the man in power directing the bulk of the money he gets for development to that section of the people or their region on which he depends for votes, however unsuitable they or it may be.

Until U.S. policymakers look these realities in the face, they will flounder blindly, making matters worse as they did in Somalia and as they are almost certainly doing in South Sudan. The French, entrenched all around, with a shrug and a pout will pull out the larger share of African chestnuts. In suffering and self-deception—notably American—Zaïre will shake out the realities. □



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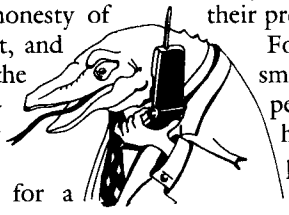
# GEKKO

BOB Dole's loan to Newt Gingrich is the first recorded case of an airbag being saved by a person.

■ Back in the March 24 issue I recounted the pervasive dishonesty of the Ecuadorian government, and the grim prospects for the country's prospective Eurobond issue, then being marketed by Chase Bank. Chase was on the hook for a $300-million bridge loan that was to be paid off by the Eurobond, and I said at the time that if the bond deal got done, the marketer should get the Salesman of the Year award.



Well, the Ecuadorian Euros got sold, even though the country's last president but one absconded with a pile of Central Bank cash in the course of the deal, and the award goes to the Chase Global Emerging Market bond team. When the deal closed in late April, the Ecuadorians had managed to raise $500 million in two slices—one fixed-rate issue yielding 4.6 per cent more than the equivalent U.S. Treasury, and a floating-rate issue going for 4.75 percentage points more than six-month Eurodollar deposits yield. This for a country whose elite is undistinguished by Latin American standards and whose people believe they are exempt from the laws of the market.

When the new Ecuadorian international financial team made its debut at the Inter-American Development Bank meetings in Madrid in mid March, they dressed a lot more like guys selling a different commodity. They wore dark glasses indoors and looked as if they should be featured in grainy police pictures shot through a telephoto lens. The Chase team realized they had a credibility problem and grimly went to work with the skill of a Professor Higgins.

The results speak for themselves. Of course, the Chase team had the advantage of being at the tail end of a market environment that rewards greed over fear, but still. As Tommy Unterberg used to call out to the floor at the old L. F. Rothschild, "If you can sell this —, you can sell anything!"

■ You know that things are as bad as they can get when even gold producers no longer believe in a rising price for their product.

For some time, of course, the smart thing to do if you want people to buy your gold stock has been to sell a substantial part of your future production forward. The people who have done this, such as American Barrick or Newmont, have outperformed the market. The people who don't, such as Homestake, have wound up at the top of the sell list.

But the ultimate sign of informed sentiment hitting the bottom was a public disclosure by an Australian gold-mining company called the Sons of Gwalia. "Sons," as the traders call it, has a reputation for being better run than other Australian mines. It has reserves of 3.06 million ounces and has sold 5.05 million of those ounces for future delivery.

As one of the heroes of nineteenth-century American finance once said, "He who sells what isn't his'n must buy it back or go to prison." That speculator was referring to Erie Railroad shares, not gold. But it turns out that Sons had gone short in part through options, rather than forward contracts, and so its management could lose its premiums but not its freedom. Even so, when part of your future prosperity depends on a continuing decline in the price of your commodity product, this is not a vote of confidence.

*"Here are some brochures explaining the fund, and here are some pamphlets explaining the brochures."*

I got in touch with Joe Walsh, an analyst with RBC–Dominion Securities in London who follows Sons. "The Lalor brothers, who control it, are extremely astute," he said. "What they are saying with this position is that it is more likely that they will add new reserves than that the gold price will rise." In other words, they might be able to get these reserves through acquisitions rather than discoveries. Given the crash in gold equities, that may be true. Sons of Gwalia could buy an existing gold mine and have much or all of its future production already hedged forward, at prices above the present gold price.

Whatever the management's future deals are, the Lalor brothers might want to move quickly. Arch Crawford says that April 28 is likely to mark a bottom in the gold price at around $339 spot.

■ "Arch Crawford," I hear you mutter patronizingly. Isn't he the market-letter guy who's the astrologer? Yes, he is. I talked to him back at the beginning of February. Arch predicted then that on the basis of his technical analysis and astrological charts, the S&P June future would peak on February 18. He was right to the day. He was also right back in August of 1987, when he predicted a long-term peak on August 24. The equity market duly peaked on August 25.

It took a while to get through to Arch, since the subscription lines to his Crawford Perspectives have been busy of late. He is moving his operation to a new house to make room for more data-entry people. What's next?

"We've had a bounce since the early April low, but it's only what I call a dead-cult bounce. I'm still 200 per cent short. If we break down in the next two weeks, we'll have a thousand-point or more decline before we get a summer rally, though not one that goes to the old highs. The real crash will come in the fall in any case. I'm buying both gold and gold stocks." How did he know? The charts? "This call, and the one in 1987, were both 100 per cent astrological, because technically they were still trending upward. The fundamentalists would have been out for two years."

Better listen up, folks. Don't try to catch a falling piano. —JOHN DIZARD



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# Mortal Sins

*The sexual revolution was based on a lie. Judith Reisman has spent thirty years uncovering the truth.*

TOM BETHELL

JUDITH Reisman was a "red diaper" baby, born in 1935. Her parents were members of the Communist Party and for a while she too belonged to a subversive organization—the Labor Youth League. Much later, when she received a Justice Department grant to examine the role of pornography in sexual abuse, law-enforcement officials knew about her background but weren't interested. One even told her that it would be easier to give the grant to her than to a white-bread whole-milk member of the Christian Right. Meanwhile the sex-studying, sex-obsessed sexology professionals did see Mrs. Reisman as a threat to their way of life, and they conducted their own investigation. But they weren't interested in her political background either. Perhaps the whole concept of subversion was too close to home for them.

Judith grew up in Los Angeles in a world of radical politics and bourgeois domesticity. She attended Fairfax High and L.A. City College, went to picnics on the beach. "I lived at a wonderful time," she said. Her father, Matthew Gelernter, was a Communist Party member and a businessman who later joined the Teamsters Union. He always came home, never drank, always loved her and supported her. Her mother "welcomed me home every day." They were working for a political revolution but were shocked by the sexual revolution that ensued. In 1954 Judith married a Polish immigrant and within ten years had four daughters. "The hedge of protection about my life was not breached until 1966," she recalled.

The Reisman family had moved to Milwaukee, and in that year she found out that her 10-year-old daughter Jennie had been raped. The culprit was a 13-year-old boy who lived in the duplex apartment upstairs. It turned out that he had perpetrated many sexual assaults on other children. His father eventually packed him off to relatives overseas, even as his younger brother was embarking on a copycat career of juvenile crime. Mrs. Reisman by then knew that the boys' father kept a stack of *Playboy*s out in the open at their home. But she was a good 1960s liberal and didn't think much of it; tacky, yes; stupid, maybe; exploitative, no doubt. But hey, there is such a thing as the First Amendment.

Jennie didn't want her mother to tell anyone what had happened. Eventually she did tell an aunt, who listened sympathetically and said: "Well, Judy, she may have been looking for this herself. Children are sexual from birth, you know." Judy was shocked by this and knew it wasn't true. Then she spoke to an old school chum who had gone to Berkeley. "You know," Carole said, "she may have been looking for this. Children are sexual from birth."

Judith Reisman had entered the World According to Kinsey. Chapter five of Kinsey's first volume, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, published in 1948, was titled "Early Sexual Growth and Activity." It claimed that orgasms of infants had been recorded and timed by trained researchers with stop watches. The Kinsey report was then and remains to this day the sole "scientific" source of such claims. But at the time Mrs. Reisman didn't know anything about this. She produced music videos for public television and went to work for the popular children's program *Captain Kangaroo*. Her work was well received, and soon the royalties allowed her to go back to university. She had become interested in the effect of visual images on young minds. The family had moved to Cleveland, and so she enrolled in a PhD program at Case Western Reserve.

One day a male graduate student presented a script for a pornographic video production. The professor in charge assured Mrs. Reisman that all the other students had given their consent. But she couldn't help noticing that although the female students said the images did not disturb them, "none of the sex photos got onto the videotape correctly." Denial, born of a fear of seeming unprogressive, was belied by the women's inability to do the work properly.

Mrs. Reisman began to concentrate on the impact of pornography on women and to give lectures on the subject. In 1977 she was invited to a conference in Swansea, Wales, the topic being "Love and Attraction." It turned out to be a veiled gathering of pedophiles. One of the speakers, Tom O'Carroll, the leader of the Pedophile Information Exchange, had already received much attention in Britain, having proselytized mightily on TV on behalf of sexual relations with children. The university staff went on strike

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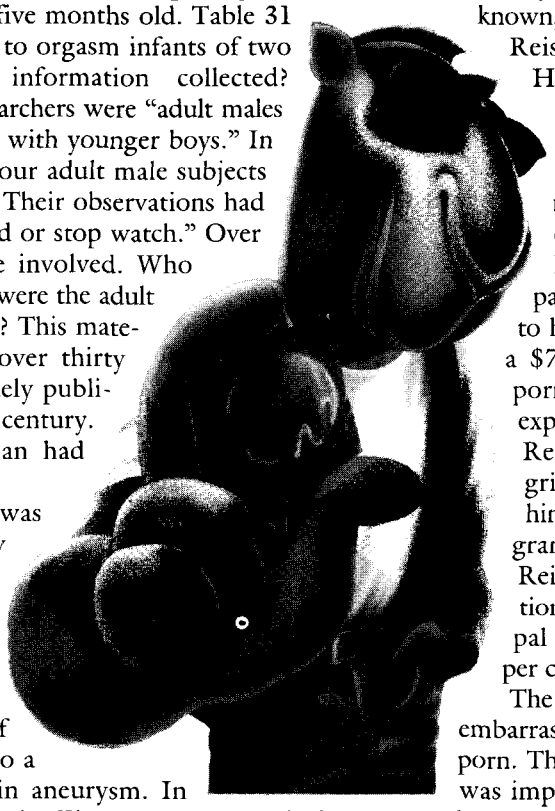
and said they wouldn't make beds or cook if he was given the podium at Swansea.

Judith Reisman's talk, illustrated with eighty slides, documented her findings of images of children in *Playboy* and *Penthouse*. It was as badly received by the professionals as the advocacy of pedophilia had been by the domestics. As she was leaving to catch the London train, a Canadian psychologist quietly took her aside. He said she was probably right that those images would cause "sexual acting out on children." But if she was looking for the cause of the child-sex-abuse epidemic, she should not neglect Edward Brecher's book, *The Sex Researcher*. Particularly the Kinsey chapter. He had once worked with Kinsey and Pomeroy, he said, and he made unflattering allegations about both. Alfred Kinsey, by the way, died in 1956 at the age of 62, but his co-authors, Wardell Pomeroy, Clyde Martin, and Paul Gebhard, are all still alive.

CHECKING the Kinsey report, Mrs. Reisman could hardly believe what she was seeing. Table 34 of the first volume gave "examples of multiple orgasm in pre-adolescent males," some five months old. Table 31 chronicled attempts to bring to orgasm infants of two months. How was this information collected? According to Kinsey, the researchers were "adult males who have had sexual contacts with younger boys." In fact, Kinsey added, "nine of our adult male subjects have observed such orgasm." Their observations had been "timed with second-hand or stop watch." Over three hundred children were involved. Who were these children, and who were the adult males engaged in this activity? This material had been available for over thirty years in one of the most widely publicized books of the twentieth century. No one before Mrs. Reisman had drawn attention to it.



In the late 1970s, she was offered a job in the sociology department at Haifa University. Two of her children had already moved to Israel, and so she was happy to go. Jennie by then had married a young Israeli. But at the age of 22, a year after giving birth to a daughter, she died of a brain aneurysm. In 1981, Dr. Reisman presented the Kinsey data to a packed session of the Fifth World Congress on Sexology in Jerusalem. In attendance was the "human sexuality brain-trust worldwide," she recalled. Her paper was titled: "The Scientist as a Contributing Agent to Child Sex Abuse: A Preliminary Consideration of Possible Ethics Violations."

She naïvely imagined that the world community of sex experts would react as she had. But that afternoon her assistant from the sociology department returned from lunch with the news that Judith Reisman, not Alfred Kinsey, was the target of outrage. The conference movers and shakers had roundly condemned her paper. Everyone the assistant had spoken to agreed that children could have "loving" relationships with adults. So what was the problem?

Dr. Reisman addressed the conference again two days later. This time she was interrupted by a prominent sexologist called John Money, with a Harvard PhD in psychology. He shouted to the podium that she would "set back the cause of sex education two thousand years," and he told a Swedish television interviewer that she was "Mrs. Hitler." Professor Money had founded the Gender Identity Clinic at Johns Hopkins University, where today he is professor emeritus. He has contributed to the *Journal of Paedophilia* (published in Amsterdam), and with parental consent has overseen sex-change operations on infants. Recently he has been in the news because a male subject, reconstructed as a female at eight months and injected with hormones, still ended up looking and thinking like a man. (See *Washington Post*, March 18; John Leo, *U.S. News & World Report*, March 31.) Professor Money was seeking to validate the feminist philosophy that major sex differences are not determined by genes. Such "sex reassignment" operations have been fairly common, but "the exact numbers are unknown," according to the *Washington Post*. Judith Reisman ripostes today that if she is Mrs. Hitler, then Money is Dr. Mengele.

In 1983 she appeared on *Crossfire* with Pat Buchanan and Tom Braden. Wardell Pomeroy appeared at the studio but then refused to appear before the cameras. An official at the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at the Justice Department saw the program. He mentioned it to his boss, Al Regnery, who "signed off" on a $734,000 grant to investigate the role of pornography and media violence in sexual exploitation and in juvenile delinquency. Mr. Regnery recalled that it "caused us a lot of grief." Indeed, a great furor erupted at this hint of social regression. The recipient of the grant was the American University, and Dr. Reisman, who was given the temporary position of research professor, became the "principal investigator." She received in the end 10 per cent of the money.

The university didn't mind the money but was embarrassed to be associated with a critical look at porn. The Kinsey Institute threatened lawsuits if it was implicated by the research, and Dr. Reisman was ordered by the university to steer clear of the Kinsey reports. Congressional committees held three separate hearings on how such a grant could have been made by the Justice Department, and in the course of one hearing, Dr. Reisman for the first time met the university president, Richard Berendzen. He seemed particularly unfriendly. Their subsequent career paths suggest what strange times we live in.

In 1990 Berendzen was forced to resign as president after he was caught making obscene telephone calls from his office. One woman (of the 15 or so called) happened to be married to a policeman. The repeated phone calls were eventually traced to Berendzen's office. Among many lurid



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things, he said that he had a "four-year-old 'sex slave' imprisoned in his office," and according to *Time* he discussed in "graphic detail" having sexual relations with children. He mentioned a child-pornography collection.

Richard Berendzen resigned, was admitted to the Sexual Disorders Clinic at Johns Hopkins, and kept his tenured professorship. In the following year he was the university's highest-paid professor (receiving $261,000). In 1992 he addressed a national conference on child victimization, with particular reference to "survival techniques." By now he had "discovered" that *he* was the victim. His mother had sexually abused him when he was a child. In his book,

# Smoking and Sex

ACCORDING to frequent warnings from the government health-care complex, a single unguarded act of sexual intercourse can expose a person to a deadly virus that will dismantle the body's immune system. A single cigarette, on the other hand, can do no such damage. Despite these very unequal hazards, smoking is now fiercely opposed, while sexual activity of almost any description is encouraged—usually as an aid to mental health. This happens most subversively in sex-ed classes, which President Clinton's former surgeon general, Joycelyn Elders, thought suitable for children in kindergarten.

Smoking is now viewed with the zealous moral disapproval once reserved for the ancient category of sexual deviance. Concern about souls has been transferred to the body, with moral indignation remaining a constant. Judith Reisman suggests a separate parallel: Just as the cigarette makers wanted to get the kids hooked on their product, so the sexologists want to get the kids hooked on theirs.

Is there a conflict between the rising concern about bodily health and encouragement of sexual expression? Condoms will square that circle. They "can be sexy," too, sex educators exult. And like filter-tipped cigarettes they can give a false sense of security. Condoms have a failure rate of over 15 per cent—where failure is measured by pregnancy; twice that where sexually transmitted agents are the test. But don't expect Surgeon General's warnings any time soon. Meanwhile, boatloads of condoms are being shipped to the Third World. Foreigners whom we treat with such disdain can be forgiven for thinking us morally depraved.

Those who are trying to stamp out smoking usually disapprove of sexual abstinence. Here's the latest message on sexually transmitted disease, plastered on buses in several cities earlier this year: "Abstinence Will Not Cure AIDS. Research Will." This was paid for by Amfar, a New York–based AIDS foundation which has enjoyed much socialite support.

Leading sex educators have encouraged sexual experimentation at an age that would cause tobacco executives to blanch. The leading sex-ed organization is SIECUS, the Sexual Information and Education Council of the United States. Chartered in 1964 by Dr. Mary S. Calderone, medical director of Planned Parenthood, it has promoted its agenda under the rubric of children's rights. A few years ago Dr. Calderone said that children have a fundamental right to "know about sexuality and to *be* sexual." (Her italics.) SIECUS today calls on the national media "to present sexuality as a positive aspect of the total human experience at *all stages of the life cycle*." (My italics.) Your tax dollars are at work. SIECUS boasted in 1994 that it was "one of the 24 national recipients of a new five-year cooperative agreement with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention."

Debra Haffner, SIECUS's executive director (lately she has been on sabbatical at Yale Divinity School), wrote a few years ago that "we need to tell teens that the safest sex doesn't necessarily mean no sex." Her list of pressure-relieving activities for kids included "oral sex" and "mutual masturbation." This would "help them delay the onset of sexual intercourse and its consequences." Sex educators view kids, demeaningly, as high-pressure boilers in need of socially constructed safety valves.

Recent goings-on at the Martha Winston Elementary School in Washington, D.C., suggest that the kids have learned their lessons. A fourth-grader who "challenged the authority" of a teacher was sent to an empty classroom. He coaxed several classmates into the room. According to the *Washington Times*, they "disrobed and practiced sexual acts on one another." The school's principal considered that no disciplinary steps could be taken because the sexual acts —between fourth-graders, ranging in age from 9 to 12—were "consensual."

For those parents who still don't realize what is going on, the point to grasp is that their children are viewed as prey. Perhaps the most striking feature of sex ed is its mendacity. In *Slouching towards Gomorrah* Robert Bork notes that it seems to operate "more as an incitement" than as a caution against sexual experimentation. Above all, the disparity between the little that we really need to know about intercourse and the lurid array of materials deployed by the sexolatrists should warn us of an undisclosed agenda. Those (numerous) cases in which parents have been kept in the dark about what is going on, and especially the cases in which children are not allowed to opt out of courses, should teach us the same lesson.

Some local-government posters displayed in classrooms could not possibly be shown in this magazine. In fact, the embarrassment of normal people in dealing with this subject has contributed to a broad news-media blackout about the horrible details. This has enabled the sex educators to take advantage of the very reticence that they are trying to break down. Judith Reisman's parents, old-line Communists, were shocked by the sexual revolution. But then, like Communists everywhere, they aspired to "build a new society." The sexologists have no such reconstruction in mind. Their goal—conscious or not—is merely to destroy the old. —TOM BETHELL



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*Come Here: A Man Overcomes the Tragic Aftermath of Childhood Sexual Abuse*, he describes his obscene phone calls as a form of involuntary "data gathering." Ted Koppel called the book a "genuine service to anyone who cared about the roots and consequences of child abuse." Berendzen finally became chairman of the Advisory Board for the National Center for Survivors of Child Abuse. His wife, Gail, wrote a "survivors" article for *Ladies' Home Journal*.

Dr. Reisman—who stumbled across child abuse in Kinsey's research, questioned the accuracy of Kinsey's data more generally, and then attempted to examine the adverse effects of pornography—has been vilified from coast to coast. She was run out of American University on the day her grant expired. The money was only half spent and her research was incomplete; but she was denied access to her own database, and her half-finished work was rewritten by unknown hands. For her there was no academic freedom. She appeared as an effective gladiator on a *Donahue* show (Phil Donahue, to his credit, did not stack the deck against her), and she has not been seen on the big TV shows since. *McNeil–Lehrer* taped her, but nothing appeared; Bill Moyers wrote letters—again nothing. Attacks on her appeared in *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, *Hustler*, and the *American Psychological Association Monitor*, in Jack Anderson's column, and in news stories that had all the detachment of a Herblock cartoon. Headlines had a way of imputing the prurient interest in porn to her.

*The old forces of blackballing, ostracism, and disapproval, once deployed by the orthodox against heterodoxy, are now fiercely arrayed against the counter-revolutionary holdouts.*

As her experience shows, tolerance is *not* the all-pervasive dogma of our day, but is specifically withdrawn from people and institutions who behave as if no revolution in sexual mores has occurred, or who obstinately question its wisdom. All the old forces of blackballing, ostracism, and disapproval, once deployed by the orthodox against heterodoxy, are now fiercely arrayed against the counter-revolutionary holdouts. The scattered remnants of orthodoxy know this and know that they will be vilified if they dare to fight. Their prudent instinct is to withdraw into private enclaves, home-school their children, and find a quiet retreat at a safe remove from crime and the federal judiciary.

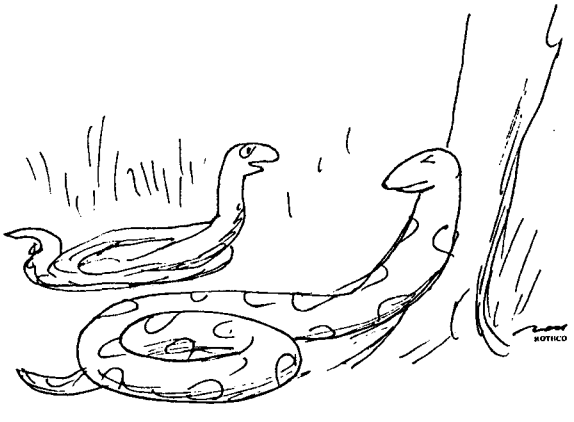
Judith Reisman, now a grandmother of nine, is still ready to stand and fight, however. Progress has been made in exposing Kinsey's deceptions, she notes. The *Washington Post*, *The Lancet*, and *Reader's Digest* have published articles about the role of pedophiles in producing some of Kinsey's data. The Family Research Council produced an effective video on the subject, and even *CBS Evening News* did a segment. There is a slow, grudging reappraisal of Kinsey's findings, his methods, and especially his badly skewed samples (1,400 of his 5,300 male subjects were imprisoned sex offenders, for example).

Kinsey's big lie—that he was a scientist, not a moralist, showing what is rather than what ought to be—has at last come under attack. Pomeroy disclosed in his 1973 book that Kinsey was engaged in an ideological mission to undermine the Judaeo-Christian ethic. In 1995, a bill was introduced calling for a congressional investigation to determine if there was "systematic sexual abuse of children" in Kinsey's research. Its main sponsor, Rep. Steve Stockman of Texas, was defeated in the 1996 election, but Rep. Peter Hoekstra of Michigan is said to be still interested.

In the United States, at least, there is no doubt that Kinsey was a more successful revolutionary than Marx or Lenin. One reason is that he didn't proclaim himself to be one. Looking back on her parents' heroes, Judith Reisman thinks that it is very difficult to instill a revolutionary outlook by encouraging young adults to go to the library and read books like *Das Kapital*. "It doesn't change you," she said. "Not in the way that having an affair can change you. That can radicalize you." Sexuality "reaches in below the belt and takes control of your emotions."

SHE does not believe that there is such a thing as impartial scientific research into sex. She has no doubt that the women's-liberation movement was and endures as a response to the betrayals of the sexual revolution. As for pornography, it "short-circuits the brain" and precludes rational thought. She is surprised that the women's movement has not produced more opponents of pornography like Andrea Dworkin and Catharine MacKinnon.

Judith Reisman's story tells us almost more than we want to know about the inequality of forces in the cultural war. In fact, the image of war is itself misleading. "War implies two opposing armies," Dr. Reisman says. In reality there is only one. The sexual revolution has resembled an incoming tide more than a war. Nothing seems able to resist it, and we can only hope that one day it will turn and move back out to sea. The cultural wreckage left behind will be considerable. Meanwhile the laws have been changed, good habits undermined, the string untuned.



*"Not* the *serpent in the garden?"*

"How can we have been so blind?" Dr. Reisman used to hear her family and friends say when she was young, referring to the Holocaust. "But look at us," she says. "People cannot identify their enemies." Still, she has not lost the gift of optimism. "This country is blessed," she says. "Change is possible. We are supposed to stand up and be counted. Beyond that, it is in God's hands." □



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TWILIGHT OF THE IDOLS

# Can Jews Survive?

*When American Jews abandon religion in favor of culture, they disappear.*

ELLIOTT ABRAMS

SINCE the earliest decades of this century, the American Jewish community has seemed the safest and most successful one in the world. It was not, until the Nazis, larger than the Jewish communities of Europe, nor did it provide Judaism's most revered scholars. But, at least since World War I, its growing size, wealth, and political influence have given it special prestige and self-confidence.

Until now. The results of the National Jewish Population Study of 1990 draw the portrait of a community in decline, facing in fact a demographic disaster. Jews, who once made up 3.7 per cent of the U.S. population, have fallen to about 2 per cent, and the proportion of Jews who marry non-Jews has edged past 50 per cent.

The steady increase in intermarriage rates becomes easier to understand when we examine the present state of Jewish belief. That many American Jews fear Christianity is no secret. Far less acknowledged, albeit much greater in its impact on the Jewish community, is the Jews' widespread anxiety about Judaism. For if the early Jewish strategy for success in America, with its requirement of "social invisibility," might be thwarted by the actions and beliefs of Christians, it could also be thwarted by the strict ritual requirements of Judaism. This is a jarring thought for most American Jews. They have devised a variety of substitutes for Judaism without consciously acknowledging that the search for alternatives to their religion is motivated by the desire to escape the constraints of a terribly demanding faith.

For people born in immigrant communities or to immigrant parents and saturated with Jewish culture, it was possible to feel "Jewish" and stay "Jewish" even without any involvement with Judaism. But it is now clear that it is not possible to transmit this irreligious "Jewishness" successfully, as the Hebrew prayers have it, *l'dor vador*—from one generation to the next.

The flight from Judaism is very clear in the data about predominant Jewish beliefs and practices. The problem is not that American Jews refuse to be Orthodox, for the term "Orthodox" is subject to varying interpretations. The real problem is that most American Jews are not Conservative or Reform either. Both of those movements have standards of behavior, such as belonging to a synagogue and attending Sabbath services, that the majority of American Jews do not meet. George Gallup Jr. and Joseph Castelli report on this phenomenon in the 1989 book, *The People's Religion: American Faith in the '90s*. In answer to the question whether religion was "very important" in their lives, Americans on average said yes 55 per cent of the time, and no only 14 per cent. American Jews, however, said yes only 30 per cent of the time, and no 35 per cent. Among fourth-generation Jews (those whose great-grandparents were immigrants) 8 per cent of Conservative Jews and 2.5 per cent of Reform Jews attend synagogue once a month or more. By comparison, Gallup recently found that 67 per cent of Americans belong to a religious institution and 58 per cent attend once a month or more.

But the substitute faiths American Jews devised in an effort to stay Jewish while achieving success in America are failing. Far from saving American Judaism, they threaten its future.

—*The Religion of Israel.* It is not too much to say that support for Israel became the key element of Jewish faith for most American Jews, central to their understanding of their own Jewishness. This passionate commitment to Israel, however, must be dated not to 1948 but to 1967. It was the Six Day War that transformed what had been solid support into a faith that must be called religious, and that provided a center to the beliefs and activities of millions of American Jews. Jews spoke of the "eleventh commandment"—no posthumous victories for Hitler—and, faced with a possi-

AKRON BEACON JOURNAL © 97
WE'RE LETTING THE CHIPS FALL WHERE THEY MAY, RENO. SEND ALL THE FUNDRAISING EVIDENCE TO THE FBI CRIME LAB.

*Mr. Abrams, an* NR *contributing editor, is president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center. This article is excerpted from the forthcoming* Faith or Fear, *©1997 by Elliott Abrams. Reprinted by permission of The Free Press, an imprint of Simon & Schuster, Inc.*



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ble new Holocaust, found their hearts moved. Leonard Fein wrote that "Israel has become for us a binding Jewish cement, a powerful explanation of the Jewish connection."

However, the American Jewish sentiment about Israel grew as the risks to Israel grew. It is in that sense a commitment to the survival of Israel-in-danger. As it today far exceeds the level of support that Israel enjoyed prior to 1967, perhaps it exceeds the level Israel will enjoy in the future if American Jews conclude that Middle East peace efforts have greatly diminished the threat to its security.

Indeed, a 1989 survey for the American Jewish Committee by Steven Cohen of the Hebrew University concluded that Israel was already only a "secondary concern" for American Jews. Cohen found, for example, that while 61 per cent of American Jews said that "to a great extent" they felt close to other American Jews, and 40 per cent said they felt close to non-Jewish Americans, only 1 per cent felt equally close to Israelis. On the contrary, 23 per cent said they felt "not at all" close to them.

Where is it possible to find a group of Jews who *are* committed to Israel, and whose children are likely to honor that commitment? The answer is, in a synagogue on the Sabbath. The faith of religious Jews, of whatever denomination, holds them in a permanent covenant with God and with the land of Israel and its people. Their commitment will not weaken if the Israeli government pursues unpopular policies, or if the cultural links between American and Israeli Jews attenuate.

Faith is the only ultimately reliable bond between American Jews and Israel. As the fear for Israel's safety and survival diminishes what will be left is the covenant with God that created the Jewish people and ties them to the land of Israel—or nothing.

—*"Prophetic Judaism" and the Religion of Politics.* The same problem that afflicts a non-religious identification with Israel afflicts "prophetic Judaism" and the link between Jewishness and politics. Most American Jews have come to believe that there is a very close relationship between Judaism and "social justice." The "prophetic tradition" in Judaism, in this view, is as much at the heart of the religion as *Halachah*—rabbinic law—or prayer. There is no doubt that Judaism is a "this worldly" religion, not given to postponing better days for the afterlife. But many Jews have read a great deal too much into the idea of "prophetic tradition," virtually identifying it with the program of American liberalism and with support for the Democratic Party. In congressional elections since 1980, Jews have cast 74 per cent of their votes for Democratic candidates (versus 53 per cent among the electorate at large); they gave 80 per cent of their votes in 1992 to Bill Clinton (while he received only 43 per cent of all votes cast). In 1996, when Clinton received 49 per cent of all votes cast, preliminary analyses concluded that he had received 78 per cent of the votes cast by Jews.

BEFORE the mass immigration from Eastern Europe, the American Jewish community had not been notably progressive on issues unrelated to direct Jewish interests. Its leadership, drawn from its most prosperous ranks, was not particularly liberal. The Pittsburgh Platform, the famous Reform statement of principles of 1885, largely ignored political and social issues. It was in reaction to the "Social Gospel" movement that arose in Protestant denominations and to the Progressive Movement in American politics at the turn of the last century that Reform Jews began their alignment with liberalism.

But very many Eastern European Jewish immigrants were on the Left politically. For poor immigrant Jews, their status as urban laborers added immediate self-interest to the philosophical attractions of socialism, trade-union activism, and Democratic Party liberalism. Liberalism, wrote Steven Cohen, can be understood as the "politics of integration," the goal being the creation of an American society hospitable to Jews.

Yet liberalism was more than a pragmatic choice for a community of immigrants. It was widely seen, in the words of one key Reform official, as "the essence of religion, certainly of the Jewish religion." The old liturgy and rituals—"rabbinic Judaism"—were marginal and outdated, "vestigial trappings." The heart of "prophetic Judaism" is social activism and social reform—*tikkun olam*, or healing the world, in the phrase (borrowed from the *Aleinu*, the closing prayer at most Jewish services) favored by many Jewish liberals.

The idea that secular Judaism is true to Judaic tradition in placing the search for social justice at the center of the religion can, however, easily be challenged. As Jerold Auerbach argued in *Rabbis and Lawyers*, that view was part of the "search for compatibility" between Judaism and Americanism. "How tempting to assume," he wrote, "that the Hebrew Bible was a preliminary draft of the American Constitution, that the Hebrew prophets were the founding fathers of American liberalism." But this compatibility thesis was deeply flawed, for "the constitutional community rests upon a conception of individual freedom, but the Torah community imposes a collective obligation of obedience." Judaism is based on divine authority, not majority rule, Auerbach reminds us,

*This politicized, left-wing Judaism will not work even on its own terms.*

and to the ancient prophets, "Justice meant nothing less than obedience to divine law."

As for the prophetic tradition, Auerbach complained that too many American Jews "hear in prophecy what they want to hear." They do not hear the prophetic call to return to faith in God and adherence to sacred law, to *Halachah*. "Prophecy, in its time a desperate cry to return to the ancient faith of covenantal obligation, became in the modern era an exit from faith." Jews have wittingly or not "transformed prophecy into a repudiation of the very sacred-law tradition at its core."

This politicized, left-wing Judaism will not work *even on its own terms*: as the demographic and other data show, it cannot maintain the loyalties of Jews over the generations. At a recent meeting of Jewish Community Relations Council executives, the then head of the Des Moines Council, Ted Lapkin, explained why:

> After all, there are a plethora of secular or non-Jewish organizations which do excellent work in the social-justice realm. If a person believes that striving toward social justice and *Tikkun Olam* constitute the primary theme of Judaism, such an individual can express his or her "Jewishness" in a completely non-Jewish organization or environment. I would submit that this line of thought has contributed to the trend which has brought American Jewry to the brink of demographic disaster.

Secular Judaism, and the substitution of politics for Jewish ritual, cannot re-



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vive Jewish life in America because they remove precisely that which binds Jews together. Jewish faith and Jewish ritual sustain the Jewish community *both* by giving Jews common values and practices *and* by separating them from others—in this country, Christians—who believe different things and worship in a different way. The replacement of that which unites Jews, and separates them from Christians, by political activities that non-Jews can undertake equally well will inevitably erode Jewish identity.

—*The Holocaust.* Commemorations of the Holocaust can, by contrast, provide a uniquely Jewish bond, and such ceremonies are playing an increasing role in Jewish life. That role, however, may also be perverse.

Attention to the Holocaust has reached a high point only now, a half-century after its end. In the 1950s and 1960s, when there were numerous signs of vigor in the American Jewish community, it was synagogues that were being built—not museums commemorating the Holocaust. But today, 85 per cent of American Jews say the Holocaust is very important to their sense of being Jewish. *Fewer Jews say that about God, the Torah, or any other factor.*

No doubt the 1967 War had its impact here too. The reminder to American Jews that millions of other Jews were still in peril brought back memories of a past, then much closer, when such peril had turned into mass murder. But as the Holocaust itself and Israel's wars recede into the past, their combined impact cannot be counted on to sustain Jewish identity in America.

Nor, indeed, has the tremendously greater awareness of the Holocaust had much effect on the actual behavior of American Jews even now. The Holocaust "revival" has occurred precisely during the years when intermarriage has spread, and ritual observance and synagogue affiliation have declined.

Unlike a real commitment to Judaism, commemorating the Holocaust is for many Jews quite convenient. This is not to denigrate the work of those who have made it their cause, much less to suggest that Holocaust survivors are taking an easy way out when they decide to communicate their experiences to us. But for most American Jews, remembering the Holocaust is neither a significant commitment of time nor a great and life-changing passion. It is instead a form of melodrama, putting oneself in the shoes of those European Jews in the 1930s and 1940s. This permits a deeper understanding of the terrors those Jews felt and the horrors they suffered. But does it produce anything positive? Rabbi Jacob Neusner does not think so. He writes that Judaism has always emphasized the moments when God saved the Jewish people (which are commemorated in the holidays of Passover, Purim, and Sukkot), while the moments of destruction and tragedy became minor fast days. "In fact," he goes on, "Judaic piety has all along known how to respond to disaster. For those for whom the classic Judaic symbolic structure remains intact, the Holocaust changes nothing. For those to whom classical Judaism offers no viable option, the Holocaust changes nothing."

What, then, is the conclusion? It was drawn by the Orthodox scholar Michael Wyschograd in his article on "Faith and the Holocaust" a quarter-century ago: "There is no salvation to be extracted from the Holocaust. No faltering Judaism can be revived by it, no new reason for the continuation of the Jewish people can be found in it."

—*"Ethnicity."* As recently as two generations ago the vast majority of American Jews spoke Yiddish; now, Yiddish speakers are elderly people, and they are not being replaced by new immigrants bringing a rich Jewish culture to America with them. Today, the only large numbers of Jewish arrivals are from the former Soviet Union, and they tend to be even more ignorant about Judaism than their American hosts.

A sense of Jewish ethnicity remains powerful for many Jews, and it is a factor in the Jewish identity of most. But with the immigration of people steeped in Yiddish culture at an end, intermarriage at an all-time high, and the population dispersing from dense urban centers into a more typical American pattern, it is foolish to hope that ethnicity can maintain the size and vitality of the American Jewish community.

AND so the exact opposite of what they expected is now happening. Jewish life that is not centered on Judaism is disappearing in America, while traditional Judaism—and above all, Orthodoxy—which was expected to disappear, is stubbornly holding on.

What the Jewish sage Saadia Gaon said a thousand years ago in Babylonia remains true in America today: Jews are a people only by virtue of their Torah. They will decline if they are driven by fear of their neighbors, fear of their own traditions, and fear of the distinct identity that their covenant imposes on them. They will survive if they cling to their faith—to their Torah. It, and it alone, is for the Jews just what the Book of Proverbs calls it: a tree of life. □

# Hillary-Care Moles

*Republicans killed HillaryCare, so why are they cozying up to one of its chief promoters?*

ROBERT V. PAMBIANCO

ON June 21, 1994, NBC aired a two-hour prime-time special on health-care reform. Hillary Clinton was the special guest for the first half-hour of the program, which portrayed the Clinton plan as a reasonable compromise. So blithely did it pass over any potential problems with the proposed regulatory regime that the Media Research Center, a watchdog group in Alexandria, Va., bestowed upon the special its "Janet Cooke Award" for the "most outrageously distorted news story of the month." Who paid the $2.5 million for the block of time to air this thinly veiled advertising for the Clinton plan (plus another million to promote the special)? The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, based in Princeton, N. J.

*Mr. Pambianco is a research associate at the Capital Research Center and editor of a newsletter that monitors advocacy groups.*



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Which would be unremarkable if the RWJF didn't trade on its reputation as a dispassionate, ideologically neutral outsider in its efforts to exert influence on the health-care debate in Washington. The RWJF offers a textbook demonstration of how insider-Washington works: an organization earns a reputation from the establishment as a bi-partisan source of "expert" knowledge about a given subject; the implicit, and sometimes more overt, liberal-leaning policy agenda of the organization is ignored; and inevitably even Republicans find themselves leaning upon it for advice and adopting its agenda.

A PRODUCT of the Johnson & Johnson empire, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, with $5 billion in assets, is among the nation's ten largest philanthropies, and it is the largest philanthropy devoted solely to health issues. From the beginning of the Clinton Administration, the powerful RWJF has been closely interlocked with the Administration's efforts on health-care reform. The foundation president, Steven Schroeder, was a leader of the Clintons' health-policy transition team. Bruce Vladeck, administrator of the Health Care Financing Administration, is a former RWJF official. Former Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services Judith Feder served for more than 15 years as an RWJF program director, consultant, and grantee. Dr. Henry Foster, President Clinton's ill-fated nominee for surgeon general, is a former senior advisor to the RWJF.

When it came time to formulate the Clinton plan, the ties became even closer. In a lawsuit filed against Hillary Clinton and her infamous health-care task force, the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons and other groups claimed that the RWJF developed the format for the task force. The task force's numerous "working groups" were modeled on plans developed by the foundation at the state level. RWJF "fellows" and others closely connected with the foundation served on the task force headed by health-care czar Ira Magaziner. Working-group members whom the White House attempted to portray as congressional staffers (to avoid problems with federal laws that proscribe closed-door meetings involving private groups) were in fact RWJF fellows assigned to the staffs of Democratic Sens. Rockefeller, Bumpers, Bradley, Kennedy, and Wofford.

At the same time that it was active inside the Clinton Administration's push on health care, the RWJF played the outside game as well. Besides the $3.5-million program on NBC, the RWJF spent another $2.5 million on a media campaign by Rock the Vote, designed to persuade young people that health-care reform was important to them. In 1993, the RWJF funded four health-care forums, which Hillary Clinton, Tipper Gore, and HHS Secretary Donna Shalala used as vehicles for promoting the White House's agenda. In addition, the RWJF has attempted to build support for a nationalized system by providing grants directly to state governments to help them draft their own—inevitably government-driven—proposals for health-care reform.

In Kentucky over the last few years a reform effort reliant on community rating (in which insurers are forced to ignore factors such as age and sex in setting premiums) has tripled the price of premiums and driven every single private health insurer save one (Blue Cross) out of the state. The RWJF provided three grants totaling more than $7 million to support this reform in Kentucky. "These things are designed to push people and government to the edge," explains Genevieve Young, a health-law lawyer who has followed the RWJF's activities closely. The idea is that when the private market collapses, government will be there to pick up the pieces. What has been notable about the recent health-care debate on Capitol Hill is how willing Republicans—with the RWJF at their backs—have been to go along.

Take last year's Kennedy–Kassebaum legislation, a package of health-care regulations meant to make insurance more portable. Dr. David P. Stevens, vice dean of the medical school at Case Western Reserve University, took a sabbatical in 1995–96 to work as an RWJF fellow and health-policy advisor to Sen. Nancy Landon Kassebaum, then chairman of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee. In an interview with the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Dr. Stevens explained how his time in Washington was more of a "health-politics fellowship than a health-policy one." He noted how the enormously complex Clinton legislation collapsed under its own bureaucratic weight. No one would make that mistake again. "[N]ow you have this very light, buoyant, minimalist bill," he told the *Chronicle*. (Sen. Kassebaum has since become an RWJF board member.)

*The Johnson Foundation trades on its reputation as an ideologically neutral outsider.*

*"This looks very good Mr. Crenshaw. Absolutely no traces of any fine print."*

Liberal Republican Sen. Jim Jeffords (the only Republican to co-sponsor the original Clinton plan in 1993) has replaced Sen. Kassebaum as chairman of the Labor Committee, which has jurisdiction over the "kid care" health-care measure being sponsored by chummy Sens. Kennedy and Hatch. Like Sen. Kassebaum, Sen. Jeffords has an RWJF fellow, Karen Guice, working for him on health care. A Republican Senate staffer who works on health-care policy says the RWJF-connected staff are "driving the ball on kiddie care."

"These people are all over the place," adds Audrey Mullen, executive director of Americans for Tax Reform. Each year, the RWJF fellows program places six health-care academics (whose salaries it subsidizes) in Senate offices. RWJF bills the program as an opportunity for health-care professionals to be exposed to the public-policy process. Others see the fellows not as innocent intellectuals but as policy entrepreneurs, more interested in increasing government than in advancing medicine. Genevieve Young, who worked on the lawsuit against the Clinton task force, notes that RWJF fellows are "strategically placed" in the offices of key senators, where they will



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have the most impact. In addition to Jeffords, fellows are currently working for Democrats Tom Daschle, Jay Rockefeller, Paul Wellstone, and John Breaux, and Republican Bill Frist.

THE current kid-care proposal appears to be modeled on an earlier Johnson Foundation initiative at the state level. In 1987 the Children's Defense Fund in Minnesota, with funding from RWJF, pushed through a plan to provide coverage for uninsured children. Sold as an inexpensive and narrowly tailored program, it quickly mushroomed into a massive entitlement covering huge chunks of the population. Minnesota is just one of the places where RWJF has had a decisive impact. Indeed, Shepherd Smith, president of the Institute for Youth Development, a group in Herndon, Va., that promotes abstinence among teenagers, says RWJF is probably the nation's most influential health-care group, "maybe even ahead of the American Medical Association." Robert Moffit, deputy director of domestic-policy studies at the Heritage Foundation, says RWJF has been the "intellectual mainspring" for most of the recent changes in regulatory policy on health care at both the federal and state levels.

RWJF president Schroeder dismisses the idea that the foundation has a specific agenda beyond improving health and health care. The Foundation merely provides data and does not take positions, according to Dr. Schroeder. "We basically fund experiments" and "test various solutions," he says. Defenders of RWJF point to its $1.2 million worth of funding for Best Friends, a group for teenaged girls that emphasizes abstaining from sex until marriage. Also, in March 1996, RWJF sponsored a health-care conference that featured prominent advocates of market-based health-care solutions from many of the big-hitting conservative think tanks. But conservatives who follow Capitol Hill debates closely know where RWJF will always end up—on the other side.

Consider last year's battle over legislation dealing with babies born with AIDS. A bill sponsored by Rep. Tom Coburn (R., Okla.) required states to include an HIV test in the series of tests already performed as a matter of course on new-born infants. The measure became mandatory only if the states failed to increase voluntary testing of the mothers. (The goal is to get pregnant women tested before they give birth, since drug treatments during pregnancy greatly increase the baby's chance of being born without the virus.) The public-health goal was unassailable, but the AIDS-activist community opposed it on civil-rights grounds. The House passed a solid bill, but the Senate version was less comprehensive and limited to only 13 states. The major stumbling block in the Senate was freshman Bill Frist (R., Tenn.), a physician.

Those who followed the baby-AIDS bill contend that Frist's doubts could be traced to the RWJF fellow advising him on health policy. The fellow, Jonelle Rowe, a neonatologist, argued that the bill would scare mothers away from obtaining necessary health care. Although Sen. Frist eventually came around to the Coburn approach, he was put in an "untenable position" by his RWJF fellow, says Barbara Ledeen of the Independent Women's Forum. She adds: "On Baby AIDS, the Johnson Foundation was a fountain of misinformation." Rep. Coburn, a family-practice obstetrician, says that when you look at the studies funded by the RWJF, "they've opposed everything I've done to bring common sense and good public health to HIV policy." He argues that the RWJF has a "tremendous liberal bias."

Unfortunately, that doesn't stop Republican Senate offices from taking its fellows—or its advice. □

# Arkansas Rapids

*The Whitewater ride continues, and from the look of things, the water gets rougher ahead.*

JOHN CRUDELE

"WERE you the trooper who took Bill Clinton to the hospital on the day he overdosed?" an FBI agent recently asked one of the members of the Arkansas governor's security detail. That was just one of the many very personal and delicate questions posed to this trooper and more than a dozen of his colleagues a few weeks ago by investigators for Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr. For the record, Trooper Roger Perry said he never took Mr. Clinton to the hospital because of a drug problem, never saw him use drugs, and saw him drink only moderately.

But if you think that means President Clinton is out of the woods, then you just don't know your way around the landscape of the Clinton scandals.

Remember Whitewater? In the media frenzy over the Asian fundraising scandal, Independent Counsel Starr's investigation of wrongdoing in Arkansas has largely been ignored by the press. Starr briefly re-emerged into public view when he recommended a drastically reduced sentence for Whitewater figure James McDougal, and when he asked for an extension of the Little Rock grand jury that was hearing Whitewater-related evidence. Otherwise, the public focus has been on the sensational stories surrounding the flow of illicit dollars into the Democrats' coffers in 1995–96.

But the questions now being asked by Starr's FBI investigators make it clear that all the older points at issue—the White House travel-office firings, the White House's use of FBI files, Vincent Foster's death, illegal campaign contributions in Arkansas, and the overall governance of Arkansas during Clinton's dozen years in the governor's mansion—are very much alive.

Prosecutors aren't giving any details, but the action behind the scenes in Starr's investigation—some of it prompted by McDougal's cooperation—suggests rough waters ahead for the White House. Starr is quietly making the case that Bill Clinton was a kind of mobster—more precisely, that he was an out-of-control politician who ran his state as a criminal enterprise for his own financial benefit. Tellingly, Starr re-

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cently enlisted the services of Thomas Dawson, a veteran prosecutor from Mississippi whose specialty is RICO prosecution of organized-crime cases.

Most troubling for the White House must be Starr's focus on whether Bill Clinton and associates skimmed money off state projects in Arkansas. In particular, Starr's office has been asking about two cases where the Arkansas Development Finance Authority raised money for the construction of prisons through a bond issue in which millions may have been diverted to political campaigns.

More than two years ago FBI agents confiscated documents from an Arkansas farmer by the name of Ray Dawson, who sold a 2,200-acre parcel of land near Forest City, Arkansas, on which a new state prison was to be built. The state raised $25 million in 1990 to build the prison, and another $900,000 just two years later to add more beds to the facility.

More recently, Starr's probers started looking into another prison deal, this one at Calico Rock, Arkansas. The prison cost state taxpayers more than $20 million to build, but sources say that the FBI suspects some of the money went not into bricks and mortar but into the pockets of Arkansas politicians. A state representative named John Miller, in whose district the prison was built, has confirmed that FBI agents took records about the project and that he was questioned.

Roy Drew, who once investigated the ADFA for the state of Arkansas, has been questioned extensively by IRS agents who are part of the Independent Counsel's investigation. "They were looking for specific transactions that involved the First Lady," says Drew, especially ones concerning Southern Development Bankcorp, on whose board she sat. Drew said Starr's office was mainly interested in any quid-pro-quo arrangements with the bank.

STARR'S investigation has gotten so broad that prosecutors are said to be frustrated, feeling they're spreading themselves too thin. One prober attached to the Starr investigation complained early on that prosecutors should simply file a suit labeled *U.S.* v. *Arkansas* and be done with it. The other matters still under investigation by Starr's office include:

—The source of funds going *into* the ADFA. Starr's investigators have had at least one conversation, for instance, with a truckdriver named Dennis Patrick who gave them documents showing that millions of dollars were passed through a bank account bearing his name. Patrick told a Starr prober in one telephone conversation that he believes the millions were drug money.

—The way Arkansas state pension funds were used, especially the Teachers' Retirement Fund. Probers have been looking into whether excessive fees were paid in exchange for kickbacks. And they are looking into how the retirement money was invested—whether loans were given to people and companies in return for favors to the Clintons.

—Bill Clinton's personal life. The FBI questioned the troopers extensively about who came to the governor's office, and FBI agents spent hours going over logs that the troopers kept. And they wanted to know about Clinton's habit of jogging to a McDonald's on Broadway in Little Rock and to a high-rise condominium complex known as Quapaw Towers on 9th Street.

The McDougals had a place at Quapaw, as did both Dan Lasater and Gennifer Flowers. Lasater was convicted on drug charges in the mid 1980s and was pardoned by Clinton. (The son of Joycelyn Elders, President Clinton's former surgeon general who resigned under fire, was also busted for drug possession in that building.) The FBI agents did not tell the troopers exactly what they were after here. But Lasater has always been an important link in Clinton's financial activities. Troopers have been repeatedly asked about Lasater's habit


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of visiting Clinton in the governor's mansion, and Clinton's practice of going to Lasater's office almost every day.

—The death of Vincent Foster. While there is still doubt among investigators as to whether Foster in fact killed himself in Fort Marcy Park, the most fruitful avenue of inquiry is likely to be concerning just when the White House knew about the death. (Former presidential aide David Watkins has been quoted by the *New York Post* as saying he knew about Foster's death from sources inside the White House more than an hour before the White House is supposed to have been informed by law-enforcement officers at the scene.)

JIM McDougal, the erratic former deal-maker who was behind the Whitewater land deal, is one of Starr's most crucial witnesses for a variety of reasons—starting with his presumed willingness now to corroborate banker David Hale's story that Governor Clinton pressured him to make a fraudulent $300,000 loan.

Starr has documents from 1977, when Bill Clinton was attorney general of Arkansas, that show that McDougal intended to sell Clinton twenty acres of land in a development called Satillo Heights at a suspiciously low price. One year later McDougal had possession of the land again, leading investigators to believe that he allowed the young attorney general to "flip" it in a profitable transaction.

The First Lady's chief potential problem also involves McDougal, specifically a loan he received in 1985 from Stephens Security Bank in Stephens, Arkansas. The $135,000 loan was supposed to go to a real-estate project of McDougal's called Flowerwood Farms. Instead, some of the money fraudulently ended up going to the McDougals' and Clintons' Whitewater project, and the rest was dispersed among various other parties in Arkansas. Starr's investigators have a list of where all the money went, and none made it into the Flowerwood project, which was never developed.

In any case, the president of Stephens Bank became concerned about an audit and demanded the money back. The Clintons and McDougals didn't have it, so they pressured another banker named David Hale for a loan.

That loan was the basis for last year's trial during which Jim McDougal, Susan McDougal, and Clinton's successor as governor, Jim Guy Tucker, were convicted on many counts of fraud.

The Hale loan was used to pay off the Stephens loan—and other things. In fact, one state trooper is supposed to have been present when Hillary Clinton actually turned over a check to the Stephens Bank president in McDougal's office. If Jim McDougal gives his account of the Flowerwood loan, Hillary Clinton could be in lots of trouble.

But, despite all this behind-the-scenes action, it's unlikely that there will be an indictment of a sitting President. Starr's office seems inclined to dump the whole matter in Congress's lap. Sources are expecting a report to be issued by this summer. When? Probably around the time that Starr intends to jump ship for a job at Pepperdine University in California.

As for Hillary Clinton? An indictment is far from impossible. The charges? Fraud, perjury, obstruction of justice, and various conspiracies.

If so, the all-but-forgotten Arkansas scandals will dominate what is sure to be a very hot Washington summer. □

# A Mouse That Roared

*When Western powers refuse to acknowledge victory, they create problems for countries that are trying to surrender.*

IRA STRAUS

IT WAS an historic moment. The Albanian navy surrendered to Italy. They fitted up their rusty ships, sailed into Italian waters, and ran up the white flag.

Finally, a few Albanians had found a way to do what the whole country has been trying to do for months: surrender. So far, however, the rest of Albania has been out of luck. And it can't very well uproot itself as a land mass and float itself across the Adriatic onto Italian soil.

Everyone in Albania—the government, the opposition, even the rebels—is asking for a Western occupation force. The only people who don't want it are the Westerners themselves. NATO is standing aside. American and German officials are saying that their troops wouldn't even know what to do there—and they are not making the plans that would *tell* the troops what to do.

Italy has actually been forced to send a few troops—not because it is accepting the surrender on Albanian soil, but because too many Albanian refugees are arriving on Italian soil. It has declared a nationwide state of emergency over the refugees, sent troops to Albania to ensure distribution of food, and impounded Albanian ships to prevent them from bringing more people to Italy. That is what we have come to: troops are sent, not to take Albania's surrender, but only to avoid taking its refugees.

In the good old days, a surrender was a surrender. Run up the white flag, and the nearest power around would collect your weapons and put your country under orders. Nowadays, as Albanians are learning to their distress, it is a lot harder. You can get a truce accepted easily enough, but not a surrender.

*In the good old days, a surrender was a surrender. Run up the white flag, and the nearest power would put your country under orders.*

It is as if we were entering into a new historic stage in the politics of surrender. After primitive surrender with all its gory barbarism and modern surrender with all its elaborate rituals, we arrive at

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the stage of postmodern decadence—the refusal to accept surrender at all.

In the primitive stage, the virile instincts were operating with full force. Any tribe would gladly accept a surrender. It would also gladly rape the women, pillage the wealth, take the best men as slaves, and massacre the rest.

In the modern stage, surrender was an institution within an international system with formal rules. One of the rules of warfare was the obligation to accept a surrender. Another was to cut down on the rape and pillage. People began asking whether it was worth it economically to take over another country, given the end of large-scale pillage and slave-taking. But the instinct of strategic gain was still there.

In the postmodern stage, strategic thinking is regarded as outmoded. If it's just "the economy, stupid," and the short-term balance sheet, then it's a wasteful expense to take over another country. Instead of a territorial acquisition being presumed a plus strategically, it is presumed a minus economically. Gone are the old natural instincts for glory and conquest; gone even are the mature instincts of strategic planning. All that's left are the sucker's instincts of penny pinching. In the final stages of decadence, thoughts about the annual budget deficit reign supreme. A poor beleaguered country can't find anyone to surrender to any more.

But before we give up on the modern stage as finished forever, we should remember its advantages. Conquest had been civilized, but countries still had the normal impulse to take over territories with any strategic potential. Within this stage, a unique height was reached in the expansionism of the United States.

In the nineteenth century, when the United States overran territories in the western portions of its continent, it incorporated them as equals. In this way, it won the full use of the energies of the people living there and others who moved in, adding their energies to its own, rather than keeping its energies limited and investing them in keeping the newcomers down. What a remarkable departure from past experience!

In the twentieth century, when the United States overran Europe and Japan at the end of World War II, it did something even more remarkable. It undertook the democratic reconstruction of the societies it overran, bankrolled their recovery, and integrated them into a common democratic system, one in which they could regain their dignity as economic and strategic partners of the United States.

This inspired a dream in many other countries: if only they could get overrun by the U.S., the way Germany and Japan had been! There was even a film about it—*The Mouse That Roared*, in which a small country declares war on the United States in order to get overrun and reconstructed.

This was the hope of millions of people. In the countries that were America's enemies in the Cold War, people naturally assumed that they could someday surrender, as in any other war, thus getting themselves rebuilt as American allies as well as ending the Cold War. This assumption became part of the collective subconscious. It emerged into the public sphere as a joke—the classic Freudian expression for a hope that can't be avowed openly because it is too wild, too easily ridiculed, too hard to express in a dignified way.

The joke was not limited to small countries; it was widespread among Russians as well. In the 1980s, Russians began openly wondering whether they would not have been better off to have lost the last world war as the Germans and Japanese had. Russia was, after all, a great power like Germany and Japan.

There were two examples of German surrender for the Russians to work from: Weimar Germany after 1918, and Bonn Germany after 1945. The Weimar

*(Continues on page 61)*


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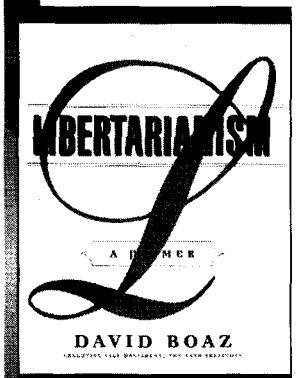


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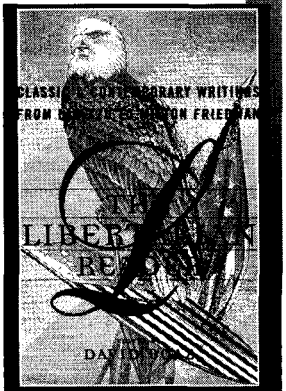

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# Controversy

FOR months Alan Greenspan and many of his top lieutenants have been publicly grumbling about the inflationary dangers of too much growth, or stock prices that are too exuberant, or unemployment that is too low, or wages that are too high. People are working and prospering, and somehow this must be a bad thing. So, in the Fed's perversely pessimistic logic, interest-rate increases must be applied to stop the march of progress.

But free-market financial and commodity prices, always hyper-sensitive to the threat of currency devaluation and price-level increases, show there is not one whiff of inflation anywhere. Leading commodity indexes have fallen nearly 10 per cent over the past year. Gold and precious metals have dropped more than 12 per cent. The dollar has appreciated by roughly 15 per cent over the past year. Even the flawed consumer price index, which overstates inflation by 1 percentage point, according to the recent report of the Boskin Commission, registered a mild 2.8 per cent rise for the 12 months to March 1997.

Despite the flood of new evidence that recent years' extraordinary advances in high technology have increased worker productivity and enlarged the economy's capacity to grow, senior Fed staffers Donald Kohn and Mike Prell, along with a recent Clinton appointee to the Federal Reserve Board, Laurence Meyer, continue to promote the Phillips Curve, an old-world Keynesian approach that asserts a trade-off between unemployment and inflation. In this model the central bank must identify and target the non-accelerating-inflation rate of unemployment, or NAIRU. When the actual unemployment rate falls below NAIRU, wages will be pushed up and inflation will rise.

The trouble is, this model has never worked. Milton Friedman long ago reminded us that inflation is a monetary phenomenon: too much money chasing too few goods, leading to a decline in money's purchasing power. What's more, the Fed has causality running from wages to inflation, when in fact history shows that rising inflation causes excessive wage hikes. Additionally, in the stagflationary 1970s we saw that rising inflation, which saps growth, causes unemployment to rise. In the 1980s, declining inflation sparked higher returns on capital investment, improved the quality of corporate earnings, and raised real incomes, thereby lowering the unemployment rate.

When President Reagan appointed hard-money commodity-watchers Manley Johnson, Wayne Angell, and Robert Heller to work with Alan Greenspan, between 1985 and 1994 the Fed focused on free-market price-level indicators to gauge whether the money it supplied was excessive or scarce. Particular emphasis was placed on the price movement of gold, broad commodity indexes, the dollar exchange rate, and Treasury yield-curve spreads. The "price rule" approach laid the groundwork for a healthy economy, stable financial markets, and a low inflation rate. Over the past five years inflation has averaged only 2.5 per cent per year, while real GDP has advanced by 2.7 per cent per year. When government statisticians learn to measure accurately the effects of the high-tech transformation of the economy, the revised data will probably show about 3.5 per cent trend growth and less than 2 per cent inflation for this period.

NR *asked the following questions of several distinguished economists:*

*1. Has Federal Reserve policy helped or hurt the economy's growth in the 1990s? Was the recent increase in interest rates a bad idea?*

*2. Does supply-side policy require an accommodating monetary policy? If so, how does it differ from old-style Keynesian policy?*

If the Republican Congress gets around to reforming the tax code, ending the double and triple taxation of capital, savings, and investment, the same quantity of money will chase more goods and services, thereby creating *faster* economic growth accompanied by *lower* inflation. If the supply curve is pushed outward, the frontier economic growth rate and the unemployment rate could be sustained in the 4 per cent zone, with price stability.

—LAWRENCE KUDLOW

IN the bad old days, the economy was run by a bunch of Keynesians. They tried to use monetary policy to prevent interest rates from rising. Low interest rates and rapid money growth, they claimed, increased spending and thus created jobs, prosperity, and economic growth. They made a mess of the economy. By the early 1980s, many people had learned that the Keynesian prescription was bad medicine. Instead of growth and employment, we had rising inflation and rising unemployment.

Enter Ronald Reagan. To restore growth, he urged deregulation, lower tax rates, and a shift of resources from public to private spending. To fight inflation, he called for non-inflationary monetary policies. The program worked. The economy has experienced steady growth for 15 years, with only a relatively mild recession in 1990–91. Inflation has fallen to the lowest level in thirty years.

Some of President Reagan's would-be heirs, including Newt Gingrich and Jack Kemp, have become supply-side Keynesians. Their criticisms of the Fed's recent rate increase neglect zero inflation, a major part of the Reagan program. Unlike them, President Reagan did not forget that a country cannot create more jobs or more growth by running the printing presses at higher speed. One reason that businesses have worked much harder to reduce costs in the low-inflation environment of the past few years is that they cannot cover their costly mistakes as easily as they could in the past by boosting prices.

Inflation is still with us. Fortunately it is at a much lower rate than in the early 1980s, but it is not zero. Money growth, on almost any measure, has been increasing for the past six months. And the increases here have been accompanied by faster money growth in Japan, and in Germany and elsewhere in Europe.

Inflation results when the sustained growth of money exceeds the growth of real output. The Fed's announcement cited "persistent strength in demand" as "progressively increasing the risk of inflationary imbalances." It didn't make the mistake of citing too much growth of supply or rely on some unreliable association between inflation and unemployment. For the present the Fed seems able to distinguish between growth of capital, labor, and productivity, which increases supply, and the too rapid growth of money, which pumps up demand. It is time for the supply-side Keynesians to do the same.

The recent increase in interest rates was a prudent move to slow the growth of demand by slowing the growth of the principal monetary aggregates. The risk that a ¼ percentage point increase in the very short-term rate that the Fed controls



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will end the expansion is practically nil. The risk that a failure to act would lead to higher inflation is neither negligible nor worth taking. The Fed did the right thing and may need to do more if it is to slow the growth of money enough to end inflation. —ALLAN H. MELTZER

UNTIL recently, Fed policy under the leadership of Alan Greenspan definitely had helped the economy's growth in the 1990s for the simple reason that the central bank had focused its attention on achieving price stability and avoided ill-fated efforts to fine-tune the real economy. The Fed's success at lowering inflation and keeping it in check has been due to its de facto adoption of a "modified price rule"—not explicitly tying monetary policy to the price of any particular commodity or price index, but instead gradually institutionalizing a reliance on market prices broadly conceived (e.g., precious metals, commodities, the exchange value of the dollar) as the best means of detecting incipient inflation and calibrating monetary policy. Markets came to believe that not only did the Fed know what it was doing, but so did everyone else. Uncertainty was being eliminated from monetary policy because the Fed's actions were discernible from objective and measurable market factors.

The Fed's recent increase in interest rates was wrong because it was totally unjustified by market indicators. The Fed appears to have abandoned its previously successful approach to monetary policy in favor of economic fine-tuning, resorting to the discredited Phillips Curve theory.

A free economy will not spontaneously exceed its capacity to grow and spin out of control into an inflationary spiral as the Phillips Curve holds. Inflation is caused by too many dollars chasing too few goods, not by too many people working. Inflation results when government prints too much money or leaves people uncertain about the future value of their currency. Far from being inflationary, real expansion of the economy soaks up inflation, creating more goods for the same amount of money to pursue.

Assuming the question uses "accommodating" to mean a Keynesian monetary stimulus to economic growth, the answer is, No. In fact, the original supply-side prescription was to halt monetary accommodation (i.e., loose-money policy) and to significantly reduce money growth in order to squeeze inflation out of the economy; at the same time, regulatory relief, spending restraint, and across-the-board reductions in marginal tax rates were prescribed to create greater incentives to work, save, and invest and thus to accelerate real economic expansion.

The American economy's capacity to grow is at least 4 per cent a year, but it is diminished considerably by ill-considered government policies. An "accommodating monetary policy" cannot compensate for the depressing effects of bad government policies. As Mr. Greenspan and I have both been arguing for more than a year now, eliminating the capital-gains tax would remove a government impediment that holds the economy back, so that the Fed would not have to fear inflation every time economic growth creeps above 2.5 per cent.

The best monetary policy would be to reattach the dollar to an anchor of gold. This could be accomplished immediately if Congress and the President were to instruct the Fed to stabilize the dollar value of the nation's gold reserves, say within a $30 band. Until we re-establish the dollar–gold link, the Fed's appropriate role is not to act as some kind of monetary chaperone, keeping the economy's growth behavior within proper bounds. The price mechanism is the economy's own internal governor, acting to keep demand within supply constraints. Until we restore the dollar's anchor to gold, the Fed's appropriate role is to pursue price stability without regard to the real economy— nothing more, nothing less. —JACK KEMP

ANSWER #1: Monetary policy has generally increased U.S. economic growth in the 1990s. Low inflation increases the potential for long-term contracting by reducing price-level uncertainty. Moreover, in the years since 1977, a reduction in the inflation rate has been followed by a reduction in the unemployment rate within three years.

The recent increase in interest rates was a correct decision.

Answer #2: Supply-side tax policy should not be complemented by discretionary demand stimulus. The Fed is best advised to maintain a steady path of some nominal aggregate such as GDP or, preferably, domestic final sales, without responding to either favorable or unfavorable changes in supply conditions.

Commentary: I am amazed at how many conservatives are quick to criticize the one successful federal economic policy in recent years. —WILLIAM A. NISKANEN


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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON

April 28, 1997

Dear Rusty,

Not much time to write . . . I'm in Philadelphia for the Presidents' Summit on Volunteerism. I know, I know, I'm not President yet, but still, I think of this as a kind of trial run.

I want America to see me out and about, painting over graffiti and talking foreign policy with Jimmy Carter—you know, presidential things.

At first I was a little hesitant. Let's be honest, this is Colin Powell's show, and you know and I know that he's running for President. He's sort of the Tiger Woods of politics: everybody likes him, everybody respects him, but he does have a way of messing things up for guys who have been playing the game for years and waiting their turn.

Know what I mean?

But Bill explained that it was good politics to show up and hold a rake and smile. "Never pass up a chance to ooze," he said, and while at the time I wasn't sure exactly what he meant by "ooze," as I introduced Colin Powell to Sunday's crowd I did feel my lower lip tremble slightly, and I "oozed" a few tears. I mean: the story of an African-American kid from the Bronx who rises to the top of the armed forces, leads us in a victorious war, and then settles into private life until he dies is a heckuva moving story, am I wrong?

The ceremony itself was pretty uneventful. It's always my job to hang out with the ex-Presidents. That, and go to funerals. "Preside over the dead and the nearly dead," Tipper says. I'm pretty good with the frozen smile and the "yessirs" and the small talk (from summers with Mom and Dad), but it's trying, I'll tell you.

In the first place, Gerald Ford keeps calling me "Whizzer." And he addressed my Secret Service men as "Your Supreme Justices," which was weird.

"Whizzer," he said as he surveyed the crowd, "do you think I can make the drive from here, or should I lay up mid-green?"

"It's a beautiful day, Mr. President," I said.

"So many damn spectators," he said. "When's Bob Hope getting here?"

"Yes, it certainly is a beautiful day," I said, and drifted off.

"Hey hey, Al Jr.!" George Bush shouted as he pumped my arm.

"Hello, Mr. President," I said.

"See my jump? I took the leap!" he cried.

"It certainly is a beautiful day, Mr. President."

"Lemme just say this, Alger, knew your dad, knew your mom, knew you when you were yay high. Nice kid. Super. Just want to say. Didya see that jump? Took a dive. Jumpsuit flapping. Flap city. Air rushing around. Got the whole lips-twisted-around thing, I'm telling you, Alger. Be honest: drool city. Yes sir. Anyway. Just want to say, Alger. Older guy to younger guy sort of thing. Didn't make any phone calls from the office. Not a one. And no sleepovers either. So next time it comes up, keep your pointing finger in your pocket. Am I getting through?"

"Yes, it certainly is a beautiful day, Mr. President," I said, though to be honest, I was surprised that Bush was so far gone mentally.

"Hey, Alger, before you go," he said. "Just figured it out. Just this sec. Thousand points of light. You know what it means? TV cameras!"

I saw what he meant: there were about a thousand TV cameras pointed at the dais, and on each one was a tiny light. And that, I think, is what makes our volunteerism effort so different—when we say "a thousand points of light," we mean it.

But Jimmy Carter had appeared at my side.

"These are dark days," he said.

"It's a beautiful day, Mr. President," I said.

"I was building a house the other day, for some of Reagan's poor, and it occurred to me, and I think, to Rosalyn, though she speaks for herself, that one of the world's great trouble spots must be here in Philadelphia. And that maybe we will ultimately fail here, just as we've failed elsewhere. I see only failure. And sadness."

"Yes, Mr. President, it certainly is a beautiful day," I said, scanning for a friendly face.

"I dreamt last night of a pillar of flame, a cascade of purifying fire come from heaven," he said. But I quickly dashed off.

It's not easy to talk to the elderly, Rusty. You've got to turn your mind off and repeat key phrases.

I heard a familiar voice. "Hi, Mr. Vice President."

But I was still on auto-pilot, so I answered, "It's a beautiful day, Mr. President."

It was Colin Powell, carrying a rake. He chuckled. "You too?" Then he handed me the rake.

And as we made our way through the people, Rusty, it seemed to me, I can't be sure, but it seemed like he might have oozed once or twice.

It's going to be a long four years, Rusty.

Your pal, Al



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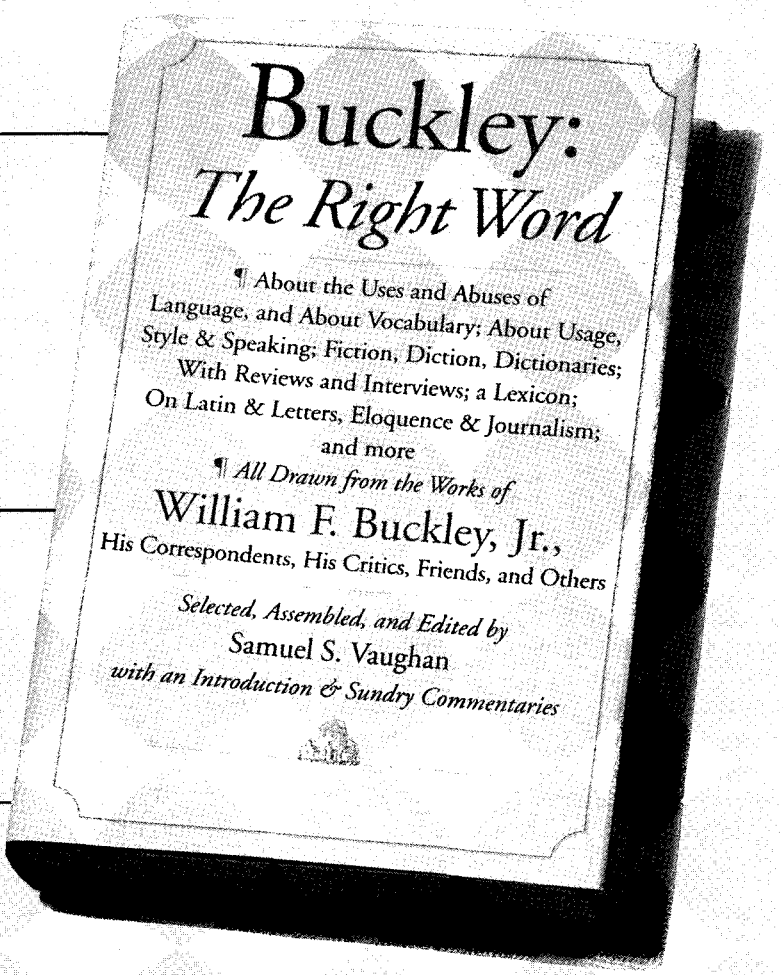
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## What in the World?

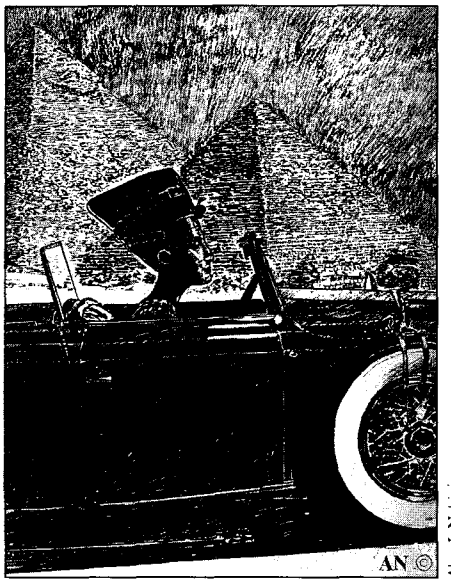
DAVID GELERNTER

THIS book, by Professors Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates of Harvard University—that's Harvard, H-a-r-v-a-r-d, a school that is said to be one of the greatest in the Boston area—roars past in a blur and leaves you suspecting you've been had, but too confused to know for sure. Eccentric dictionaries are a valuable genre, and this one is plenty eccentric. But what sort of items does a "dictionary of culture" discuss? Is that "culture" as in "twentieth-century popular"? Unlikely; there are no entries for John Lennon or Bob Dylan, Glenn Miller or John Wayne. Culture as in "high"? But there is nothing on such shadowy figures as Wordsworth or Coleridge, Keats or Twain, Frost, Stevens, or Auden. Is science part of culture? Joseph Lister and Edward Jenner make the cut, but not von Neumann, Heisenberg, or Gödel. What about politics? John Kennedy is in, but Disraeli, Lloyd George, LBJ, and Margaret Thatcher are out.

***The Dictionary of Global Culture, by Kwame Anthony Appiah and Henry Louis Gates (Knopf, 717 pp., $35)***

Granted these names are all Western, but so am I; to judge the work as a whole I have to stand on (what is to me) solid ground, from which viewpoint the book flunks. I don't have the vaguest idea what principles underlie the selections, or what Appiah and Gates mean by "culture." Why should I trust them to teach me about China or Indonesia if they haven't got Europe and America straight?

The assumptions underlying the project are never spelled out clearly. To the extent you can guess what they are, many of them seem to be wrong. Perhaps they aren't, but I can't tell and I don't see how any reader could. Here is the key text, the authors explaining their method: "We asked academic experts in universities in many countries to suggest around fifty of the most important cultural contributions from the region in which they are expert. We collated their suggestions, producing for each region a master list of the top fifty or so topics"—and evidently this master list dictated the contents of the dictionary. What "regions" were included? "China to Chile," say the authors; that's it. How was a "region" defined? They don't say. How many regions are there? They don't say. The jacket reports "more than 1,200 entries," so I assume there are more than 24 regions, at fifty entries per. Why is this a good idea in the first place? That's a tough one.



Alan J. Nahigian

This is an American book for American readers, and the general premise is sound: We ought to know more about the world at large. The project aims to bring us up to speed on non-American, non-European cultures. It's mildly confusing that, notwithstanding, the authors include entries on Washington and Jefferson and Lincoln—but no one (take my word for it) will ever turn to this book for information about Thomas Jefferson. Granting, however, that Americans are badly informed about the world's non-American "regions," why should they want to hear about every region's top-fifty hit parade of "contributions"? Culturally speaking, China is a lot more important than Chile. By settling on each region's top fifty, the authors acknowledge that some contributions are more important than others; if you can rank people within regions, why not across regions? Why can't you rank the regions themselves? If Chile and China deserve equal representation, why don't Thomas Jefferson and Phil Donahue? Even if we stipulate that importance is uniformly distributed across all human beings, there are a lot *more* Chinese than Chileans, and China has a longer history. You might as well organize an encyclopedia on the principle that each letter gets five hundred pages. That way you are fair to the whole alphabet.

None of this would matter if the entries were worth reading. (On my desk I have at the moment, for example, a paperback copy of David Thomson's *Biographical Dictionary of Film*, the 1994 Third Edition. Thomson commits such appalling errors as leaving out Edward Everett Horton, Eric Blore, Joan Leslie, Betsy Drake, and Vera-Ellen, and on page 498 he inexplicably refers to Constance Dowling as Virginia Mayo. What can you say about such a misbegotten book? That it has great style and panache, reads beautifully, and is indispensable.) But *The Dictionary of Global Culture* is so badly written it sets your teeth on edge.

The authors have an unusual flair for

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*Mr. Gelernter is a computer-science professor at Yale, an adjunct fellow at the Manhattan Institute, and the author of* 1939: The Lost World of the Fair *(Free Press).*



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writing sentences that read like *New Yorker* newsbreaks. "Explaining that he did not feel comfortable among people he felt contempt for, Wittgenstein left Cambridge." (Good explanation. He wasn't a great philosopher for nothing.) Picasso "settled on the Left Bank in 1903, and his work was immediately recognized." (By an old family friend, who gave it a dollar and sent it home.) "Usually bold, abstract forms, Matisse's sculpture exhibits the influence of French sculptor Auguste Rodin," in snazzy glass display cases of fauve design? "Socrates was born to well-off Athenians, which allowed him to serve in several military campaigns"—and which also, no doubt, bragged endlessly about their gifted son. "Parker remains respected in both literary and social circles, having left behind countless anecdotes . . ." and forgotten to come pick them up. At times the authors express simple thoughts in amazingly perverse ways. "But no analogy is ever *perfect* (that is what makes it an analogy, after all!) . . ." Its imperfection makes it an analogy? When I tell someone, "That's a perfect analogy," what do I mean, if anything? If I were Appiah or Gates, I would sue my editors for negligence, and no doubt I would clean up.

The whole enterprise raises questions about global culture that the authors ought to have addressed but didn't. The "global system of culture," they say, "is increasingly less dominated by the West, less Eurocentric, if you like." How do they know? Western culture is on the retreat in Muslim theocracies. But Asia is increasingly keen on such Western ideas as free-market capitalism, and is getting rich peddling Western technologies from cars to TVs to memory chips. Eastern Europe is replacing one Western idea (Marxism) with another (democratic capitalism), and in Russia a different Western idea (Christianity) is undergoing a modest revival. How does it all balance out, and what does it mean? The authors lay down their bland, trite assertions and move on. The whole world, they observe, uses Western year-numbers nowadays, pegged to the birth of a certain Jew whose career means nothing except to Christians, and in a secondary way to Jews and Muslims. This observation leads them nowhere, except to the obvious fact of Western colonialism. Does the Western sense of time play any role? What about the small but fascinating fact that Europe alone developed modern escapement-based clocks? Why *did* Europeans happen to colonize the world, anyway? Why didn't the world colonize them? All these questions bear on the meaning of "global culture," but the authors don't touch them.

*What does Wordsworth amount to when you stack him up against Lillian Hellman?*

The book has its points. It is a pleasure to come across such great but (somewhat) neglected composers as Dvořák and Sibelius, although it's clear that they were admitted only on an affirmative-action basis—hailing as they do from musically under-represented regions. The authors have tried hard to transcend their political prejudices. They sometimes fail—look up "Columbus" or "Hiroshima." But after blasting the evils of European colonialism, they urge us to "take pleasure in the benefits of the creation of a global culture under the steam of the economic, technological, religious, and cultural ideas of Europe and her heirs." Whatever—you get the general idea. The results of this exercise in political neutrality are mixed, but the attempt shows integrity.

Still, you are left in the end puzzling over those wild and crazy selections. The *Dictionary* reads like a gross parody of every race- and sex-based "diversity" program ever conceived. Why is it a bad idea to substitute "diversity" for merit? Because you wind up with Amy Lowell and not Robert Lowell. With Joe Louis but not Jonas Salk or Alexander the Great. With Villa-Lobos but not Gershwin. With Lillian Hellman, Zora Neale Hurston, Toni Morrison, and *maté* (a South American beverage that is evidently delicious "with sugar, milk, or lemon juice"), but not Wordsworth. Then again, what does Wordsworth really amount to when you stack him up against Lillian Hellman? □

# Why Nations Conquer

STEVE SAILER

AN early version of this book's subtitle illustrates its ambitiousness: *A Short History of Everybody for the Last 13,000 Years*. Jared Diamond's goal is to explain why Eurasians conquered Africans, Australians, and Americans instead of the other way around, even though conventional social scientists shy away from such a fundamental question out of fear of what they might find. Since random accidents of personality and culture appear too trivial to account for the lopsided outcomes when continents clash (e.g., a few hundred Conquistadors demolished the grandest empires of the New World), this leaves only two possible underlying causes: either the winners had better homelands, or they had better bodies and brains. Deeming genetic explanations "racist" and "loathsome," Diamond sets out to reaffirm the equality of humanity by showing the inequality of the continents. To him, the three most important engines of history are location, location, and location.

***Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies, by Jared Diamond (Norton, 448 pp., $27.50)***

Few are more broadly qualified than he to write history in terms of geography and sociobiology. A molecular physiologist at UCLA, Diamond is also an evolutionary biologist. His 33 years of birdwatching in the tropics, especially in New Guinea, home to one thousand of Earth's six thousand languages, put him in touch with a remarkable variety of human beings. Diamond wrote little for popular audiences before his dazzling 1992 book, *The Third Chimpanzee: The Evolution and Future of the Human Animal*. In contrast to that kaleidoscopic page-turner, *Guns, Germs, and Steel* hammers away at a single thesis. Nonetheless, it rewards the effort.

Diamond argues that the broadest aspects of the modern world—e.g., the domination of North America by whites—were largely determined by the continents' dissimilar natural resources of

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domesticable plants and animals. Regions offering an abundance of these could support the transition from hunter-gatherer to farmer-herder, allowing higher population densities. And those communities that could free up the most manpower from farming to specialize in technology and war could conquer their neighbors. A few areas, especially the Middle East, were home to many easily domesticated foods: both grains such as wheat and large mammals such as cows and sheep. Other parts of Eurasia such as Europe were close enough to the Fertile Crescent for early diffusion of these crops and livestock.

In contrast, much of the Earth—including seemingly congenial landscapes like California—lacks native plants that would be more profitable to cultivate than to gather. What valuable vegetation the New World did possess, like Mexico's corn, was slow to migrate north and south along the Americas' main axis because crops' growing seasons are sensitive to latitude.

Also, the New World was badly lacking in large domesticable mammals. Excluding boutique operations, humans today raise just 14 species of mammals weighing over one hundred pounds. Of these, only the llama is native to the Americas. Of course, 13,000 years ago the New World teemed with potentially useful beasts like horses and camels. Then the American Indians arrived and, Diamond says, ate them. This rapacity made their Aztec and Inca descendants both militarily impotent and dreadfully susceptible to the Conquistadors' diseases. The Spaniards, in contrast, were heirs not just to Eurasia's foods and technologies, but also to immunities to its germs. Since the worst contagious diseases afflicting human beings descended from farm animals' diseases (e.g., smallpox from cowpox), native Americans had few diseases of their own with which to fight back.

Mr. Diamond is not content, however, merely to write the history of the last 13,000 years. He also claims that his evidence is politically momentous because it shows that no ethnic group is inferior to any other: each exploited its local food resources as fully as possible. For example, after the Australian Outback explorers Burke and Wills exhausted their Eurasian-derived supplies, three times they had to throw themselves on the mercy and expertise of the local Stone Age hunter-gatherers. These Aborigines, the least technically advanced of all peoples, may not have domesticated a single Australian plant in forty thousand years, but in two hundred years Down Under scientific whites have domesticated merely the macadamia nut. Farming pays in Australia only when using imports.

But, are indigenous peoples merely *not inferior*? In truth, on their own turf many ethnic groups appear to be somewhat genetically superior to outsiders. Diamond makes environmental differences seem so compelling that it's hard to believe that human beings would not become somewhat adapted to their homelands through natural selection. And in fact, Diamond himself briefly cites several examples of genetic differences affecting the course of history. Despite military superiority, Europeans repeatedly failed to settle equatorial West Africa, in part because they lacked the malaria resistance conferred on many natives by the sickle-cell gene. Similarly, biological disadvantages stopped whites from overrunning the Andes. Does this make Diamond a loathsome racist? No, but it does imply that a scientific-minded observer like Diamond should not dogmatically denounce genetic explanations, since he is liable to get tarred with his own brush.

*For Diamond, the most important engines of history are location, location, and location.*

The undeniability of human biodiversity does not prove that we are also somewhat diverse mentally, but it's hard to imagine why the brain would differ radically from the rest of the body. Consider the fable of the grasshopper and the ant. The ant's personality traits —foresight and caution—fitted him to survive predictably harsh winters. Yet, the grasshopper's strengths—improvisation and spontaneity—might furnish Darwinian superiority in the unpredictably dangerous tropics.

Like many, Diamond appears to confuse the concepts of genetic superiorities (plural) and genetic supremacy (singular). The former are circumstance-specific. For example, a slim, heat-shedding Somalian-style body is inferior to a stocky, heat-conserving Eskimo physique in Nome, but it's superior in Mogadishu. In contrast, genetic supremacy is the dangerous fantasy that one group is best at everything. Before the European explosion began in the fifteenth century, it seemed apparent that no race could be supreme. Even the arrogant Chinese were periodically overrun by less cultured barbarians. The recent European supremacy in the arts of both war and peace was partly an optical illusion masking the usual trade-offs in talents within Europe (e.g., Italian admirals were as inept as English cooks). Still, the rise and reign of Europe remains the biggest event in world history. And yet the era when Europeans could plausibly claim supremacy over all other races has been dead for at least the sixty years since Hitler, of all people, allied with Japan.

The historian who trumpets the political relevance of his work must consider both the past *and* the future, which Diamond fails to do. Surprisingly, ethnic biodiversity is becoming more important in numerous ways. Until recently, one's location and social position at birth closely constrained one's fate. But, as equality of opportunity grows, the globalized marketplace increasingly exploits all advantages in talent, including those with genetic roots. Pro sports offer a foretaste of the future: many are resegregating themselves, as ethnic groups increasingly specialize in those games they're naturally best at. In summary, Diamond may prove a better guide to the last 13,000 years than to the next 13. □

# Before He Was a Virgin

LIONEL CHETWYND

"THIS story is half true" is the entire preface to Rob Long's delicious examination of the folkways and mores of Hollywood. He might have added that in Hollywood, truth is a commodity to be dealt with only in terms of whether it helps or hinders whatever you happen to be pitch-



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ing at the moment. In these rite-of-passage confessions, Mr. Long is pitching his own honor, as if to say, "I'm not like the rest of them. All this happened before I was a virgin." But, of course, he *is* one of us. How else could he have captured so perfectly the mixture of ennui and adrenaline that attends life in the entertainment industry? In terms of the whole truth, *Conversations with My Agent* is the best thing since *The Judy Garland Story* or *The Larry Sanders Show*. Even the form of the book is instructive, mixing as it does essay-like prose with screenplay-format inserts, first-person observations with third-person stage directions. If nothing else, this book shows how to format a screenplay.

We learn at the outset that Mr. Long had, by age thirty, risen through the ranks of the entertainment industry to be a writer/producer of *Cheers,* which is very high up the food chain indeed. But that is really only context, a credential offered the reader as evidence that this is an authoritative voice describing a journey that has a destination. It is a trip worth taking with Mr. Long (who is an *NR* contributing editor and the author of the regular feature "Letter from Al").

Conversations with My Agent *is the best thing since* The Judy Garland Story *or* The Larry Sanders Show.

Mr. Long begins his journey as a fresh-faced 23-year-old, newly arrived in Los Angeles from the Ivy League and in search of fame, fortune, and a great deal of money. (He was not alone; Hollywood was—and is—filled with young men and women who think these three things are guaranteed them by their Ivy League degrees, only to be shoved aside by a cunning graduate of the Pismo Beach School of Liberal Arts.) Mr. Long reasonably seeks a grounding in his new field with graduate work at the UCLA Film School, an internationally renowned institution. His description of that experience is painfully funny, very accurate, and unlikely to make Rob Long a desirable reference for new applicants. The dialogue he writes (in screenplay form) for his first day at film school has the ring of total truth:

*The head of the program, a bearded, elfin-looking guy in pressed jeans and a white shirt, greets us.*

HEAD OF PROGRAM

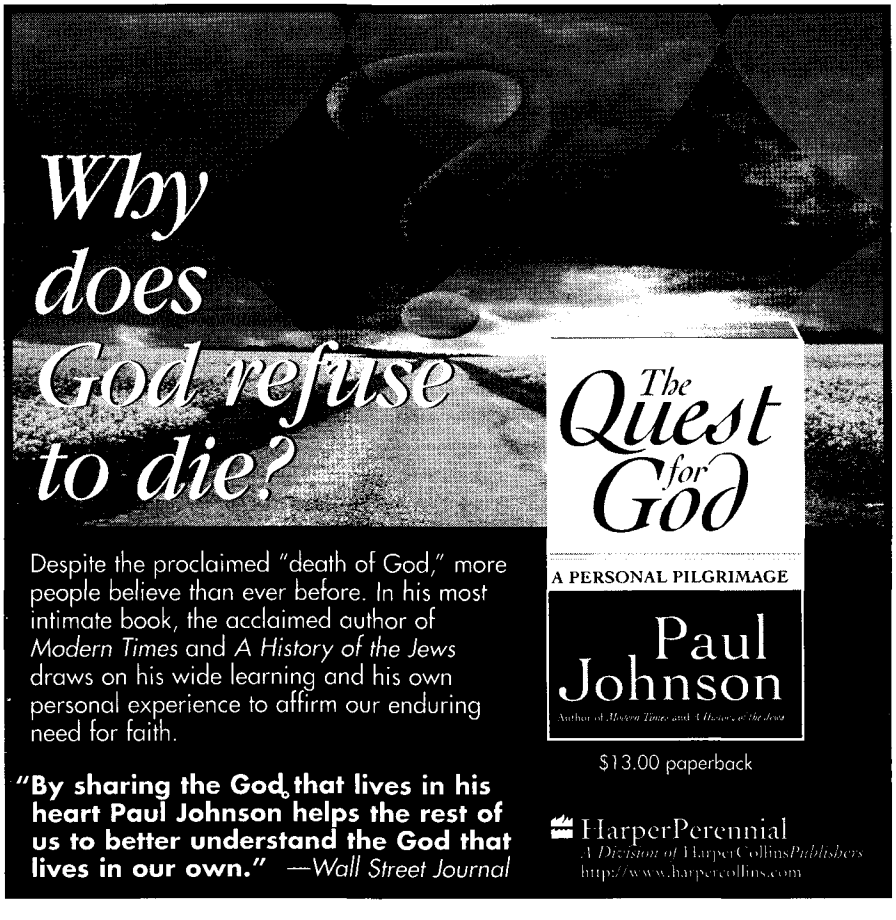
I'm passing out a list of the scripts I've written and the subsequent events that led to me being cheated out of screen credit. The important thing though . . . is the book I wrote on scriptwriting, which will be the text for this class, and which is available at all the big bookstores for $22.95. Okay? Buy the book. Class dismissed.

*There are only nine class meetings scheduled of which this one, lasting all of ten minutes, is the first.*

So much for film school. That behind him, he embarks upon his career, the first stop involving the acquisition of an agent. This is one of the more difficult hurdles, one that is effectively "the first cut," sending more than half the aspirants back to the relative safety of Wall Street trench warfare. As Mr. Long makes clear, nothing is more critical than the quality and loyalty of one's agent. Well, "quality" and "loyalty" might not be appropriate adjectives for Hollywood agents, but you get the point. Rob Long's agent is both his Yoda and his Darth Vader, a person who not only educates him in the real ways of the jungle (who needs UCLA?) but also is his antagonist, constantly prodding and jabbing at him, pushing him forward or studiously ignoring him in the attempt to maximize both their incomes.

***Conversations with My Agent, by Rob Long (Dutton, 224 pp., $15.95)***

But the truly marvelous thing about *Conversations with My Agent* is its small perceptions: whose car the parking attendant brings first after a smart lunch meeting between a client and an agent;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*Mr. Chetwynd is an Oscar-nominated filmmaker, and writer and producer of* Colors of Justice, *to be released in September by Showtime.*



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the moments of hating the telephone, praying it won't ring with a cancellation notice or beseeching it to clamor with job offers; which productions are worthy of leather jackets for the crew and which rate only baseball caps; how you become reluctant to tell strangers what you do, for fear that they will mail you their (or their son's/daughter's/neighbor's) screenplay; how East Coasters both hate and envy us; the subtle ranking of residential neighborhoods; why an order for 13 episodes can be as depressing as none at all; and most of all why, in Hollywood, the next best thing to a yes is always a no. For this is the land of the indefinite maybe, the Purgatory of hope that never dies and the Hell of "being in development." All of these Mr. Long observes and analyzes for us. And does it with humor, grace, and as much honesty as the subjects (he and Hollywood) will allow.

By the time Mr. Long reaches the last stage of this voyage, he recognizes that he has become one of us, another Stepford Wife ready for assignment to her master.

And therein lies the one thing that is missing from the book: an explanation of why so many intelligent, honest, sincere, and committed people devote themselves to a life of toil in the factories of America's Popular Culture. Are Jaguar convertibles, the Malibu beach house, the vacations on Bora Bora worth the *Sturm und Drang*?

I could answer that question, but my agent's on the phone.

Love ya, babe. Thinking of *you*. □

## *LITERATURE*

# The Beats Now

RICHARD BROOKHISER

WITH Allen Ginsberg's death at age seventy, the Beats lost one of their last survivors, and their most tireless booster. In the mid Eighties, as reported in the obituary we ran last issue, Ginsberg even came to a book party in the old *NR* conference room, trailing his long-time lover, Peter Orlovsky. He wanted to put the touch on Jeffrey Hart for a National Endowment for the Humanities grant for some project of Orlovsky's. By then, he himself was beyond the need for federal boodle. He had won the National Book Award, and was a chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres. To his credit, his efforts to lift his old friends into the Pantheon with him seemed free of the self-promotion of coteries. He praised (and overpraised) his friends because he truly admired them, not—unlike the fleas and ticks of Bloomsbury—because he expected their luster to reflect back on him. Now that he is gone, we can take a clearer look at the Beats and their work. What follows is an unscientific survey of Beat "classics" that are in every bookstore.

*Mr. Brookhiser, a senior editor at* NR, *is the author most recently of* Rules of Civility *(Free Press).*

The Beats had two capitals. One was San Francisco, where the City Lights bookstore has grown into a boho Barnes & Noble. It was Herb Caen, the local gossip columnist, who popularized the derisive term "beatnik." The other focal point was New York, where some of the young Beats attended Columbia, and all of them studied low-life in Times Square. New York was also a short bus ride from Paterson, New Jersey, where Ginsberg came from, and where the older poet William Carlos Williams lived. The two corresponded, and Williams wrote the introduction to *Howl & Other Poems*, Ginsberg's first book. In his own long poem *Paterson* Williams reminded himself to "write carelessly so that nothing that is not green will survive." Here was the connection between Modernism and the Beats, between "make it new" (Ezra Pound) and "first thought, best thought" (Lawrence Ferlinghetti). Of course, Williams also wrote, "Watch carefully and erase, while the power is still yours." That got lost in transmission.

Ferlinghetti and William Burroughs needed the advice most. Ferlinghetti's *A Coney Island of the Mind* is a short but disappointing book. The poems seem ingenuous, and you think, as you begin each one, that you might be reading a high-school literary magazine gone to Heaven. But they all run out of breath, even in the course of fifty-yard dashes, and end up cute or sentimental. If you have to read this kind of thing, read what your kids write.

Burroughs, amazingly, is still alive. The scion of St. Louis bourgeois gentry, he has taken every drug in the pusher's pharmacopeia. He must have excellent genes. *Naked Lunch*, recently made into a movie, is a collection of riffs and delusions from the throes of addiction; the title was supplied by Jack Kerouac. Burroughs has the voice of a droll Yankee yarn-spinner. But the subject matter is utterly deranged—paranoia, sadism, sodomy, police chases, all shuffled like cards. It is impossible to read more than three pages at a time.

Kerouac and Ginsberg take us to different territory. There is something conventionally earnest and ambitious about both of them, and (in part) they succeeded.

Like many French Canadians, Kerouac was born in Massachusetts. In early photographs, he smolders like a postwar biker, *à la* Brando or Elvis. In the late Forties, he made several drives cross-country, and one to Mexico, often in the company of Neal Cassady, a manic car thief. (Years later, Cassady, a man for all seasons, reappeared among Ken Kesey's Merry Pranksters.) Kerouac's long-winded accounts of what he saw were published as *On the Road*. Truman Capote sneered at *On the Road*, calling it "typing," and there is truth to that; but if you had to choose between it and an overwrought knickknack like Capote's *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, written about the same time, you would be better off with the former.

Kerouac inadvertently captures items of historical interest. One is the early emergence of white self-hatred.

> At lilac evening I walked with every muscle aching among the lights of 27th and Welton in the Denver colored section wishing I were a Negro, feeling that the best the white world had offered was not enough ecstasy for me, not enough life, joy, kicks, darkness, music, not enough night. . . . I wished I were a Denver Mexican, or even a poor overworked Jap,



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anything but what I was so drearily, a "white man" disillusioned.

Stated so baldly, the thought seems funny: you can almost hear the Oscar Mayer jingle, *That is what I'd truly like to be.* But it has been a feeling with great cultural power for decades, and there is no end in sight.

*Jack Kerouac inadvertently captures items of historical interest. One is the early emergence of white self-hatred.*

Another notion, now gone, is jazz as a mystical force. Baby-boomers weaned on rock and flapdoodle about rock will be amazed to read Kerouac carrying on about the jazz pianist George Shearing. I never thought of "Lullaby of Birdland" as a religious experience, but evidently I was mistaken.

Among the intended virtues of the book is its affection for the country, even though Kerouac never stays in one place long enough to understand much about it. Sometimes his prose coheres: "By night Missouri; Kansas fields, Kansas nightcows in the secret wides, crackerbox towns with a sea for the end of every street." And sometimes, he admits that the secret wides are in him. At one point Cassady wants him to sleep with his wife while Cassady watches. Kerouac tries, but can't. "It was three children of the earth trying to decide something in the night and having all the weight of past centuries ballooning in the dark before them." If we understand "ballooning" as floating away, this is a bull's-eye.

Ginsberg's two major poems are "Howl" and "Kaddish," both published in the late Fifties. "Howl" has flashes of humor and a few good phrases, but the only impression it gives is that the author is a very unhappy young man. Unlike Kerouac, he blames his woes on American civilization, or "Moloch." (Ginsberg was a red-diaper baby, and his politics were a toxic-waste dump.) In "Kaddish," he is still unhappy, but now he has something to be unhappy about: the madness and death of his mother, Naomi. The focus makes all the difference. The lurid details of institutionalization, lobotomy, and Naomi's crazy seductiveness are saved from *Oprah* by Ginsberg's pity and terror. In the last section of the poem, when he visits her grave on Long Island, the conjunction of his muttered prayers ("Lord Lord Lord") and the senseless calls of crows ("Caw caw caw") make grief universal. Twenty-five years later, Ginsberg wrote of his mother again, in a dream poem called "White Shroud"—a shorter, sharper "Kaddish."

Even "White Shroud," however, feels about 20 per cent too long. Both poems are repetitious. To make matters worse, Ginsberg's long line is clumsy. It should flow, but instead it knocks, like a softball bouncing down a staircase.

Ginsberg cared about poetry—he met Ezra Pound as well as Williams, and he read widely. But he had terrible judgment about his own talents. His *Selected Poems* is stuffed with dull rambles, awful pseudo-blues ditties, and painful imitations of Blake's songs. His best mode is the little poem, based on Chinese, Japanese, or the Greek Anthology. They can be erotic (which, for Ginsberg, is homosexual), elegiac, or observant. Sometimes the poems are as little as this:

> *Sky reddens behind fir trees, larks twitter, sparrows cheep cheep cheep cheep cheep.*

Or this:

> *Get used to your body, forget you were born, suddenly you got to get out!*

It looks easy, but try it. So far from being first thoughts, these were thoughts at the end of Ginsberg's life.

Every poetical fashion crumbles or stiffens, and every poetical reformer—Dryden, Wordsworth, Eliot—wants to recover the power of direct expression. So did the Beats. If they had paid as much attention to their words as they did to their feelings and thoughts, they would have expressed more.

One of Ginsberg's late poems was a dream dialogue with Williams. "Take your/chances/on/your accuracy," Williams tells him. Ginsberg and his friends did. But only rarely did they give their readers enough to enable them to share the accuracy fully. □

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## *FILM*

# Clinkers

JOHN SIMON

THE Academy Award for best foreign film went this year to the Czech ***Kolya***, by Jan Svěrák, starring his father, Zdeněk, and, in the title part, the Russian five-year-old Andrej Chalimon. This is the story of Louka, a middle-aged cellist in the Czech Philharmonic, fired for political reasons (the time is 1989, just before the Velvet Revolution) and reduced to playing at funerals. A compulsive womanizer, Louka is also heavily in debt, which is why he reluctantly agrees to an arranged (and illegal) marriage with a young Russian woman, a means to pay his creditors and even buy a small car. That the woman is a beauty helps; that she promptly runs off to Germany and her married lover, sticking Louka with her small son, doesn't.

The body of the film concerns the growing affection of Louka and Kolya, with the musician teaching the boy Czech, and the child teaching the man life. For it is in his paternal responsibilities that the philanderer specializing in adulterous wives finds, at last, true meaning, and eventually even monogamy; whereas Kolya gets what he lacked most, a father. But the path to this happy resolution is fraught with comic and not so comic pitfalls, and the ending is merely bittersweet, but uplifting.

That sounds wonderfully wise, doesn't it? Yet the film never gets beyond surfaces, is episodic to the point of randomness, and aims at nothing higher than feelgoodism with a veneer of maturity. Yes, it is interesting that Louka is an over-the-hill Lothario who nevertheless scores with lovely young women; that Kolya is neither angelic-looking nor especially fragile, but an ordinary little boy with peasant features; and that many key scenes take place at comic funerals. Still, the film coasts along complacently from cliché to cliché, and although papa Zdeněk is an accomplished actor and son Jan a dutiful director, the Svěrák cottage industry does not hit home.

*Mr. Simon is* NR*'s film critic.*

What *Kolya* did for me, though, was to bring back memories of another Czech film about classical musicians, Ivan Passer's *Intimate Lighting*. That is one of the all-time greats, and if you haven't seen it, move heaven and earth to do so. Ditto if you have seen it: it demands periodic revisiting.

■ Every once in a while a film fantasy comes along that truly works; but, by and large, fantasy is the hardest genre to pull off. Which is not to say that most movies in which a ghost or an angel returns from the beyond to help a beloved mortal find happiness won't flourish at the box office: cozy, sentimental religiosity of the bogus kind goes over big. But art it is not.

*At the box office, cozy, sentimental religiosity goes over big. But art it is not, as* Commandments *demonstrates.*

The latest such piece of arrant trumpery is ***Commandments***, written and directed by Daniel Taplitz, who ought to be ashamed of himself: he has combined the Biblical stories of Job and Jonah, and turned them into a comedy-drama that is neither genuinely comic nor especially dramatic. And the religious posturing is saved from offensiveness only because it can't begin to be taken seriously.

The story concerns Seth Warner, a young man who loses his beloved wife, Karen, when, while he snoozes on a sunny beach, she somehow drowns in a calm sea. Next, his house is destroyed in a pinpoint cataclysm, while all other buildings remain untouched. Even his dog gets it—not quite in the neck, only in the leg, canicide being taboo in the American cinema. That is the last straw. Seth, the son of good Jews, rebels against the Lord. Even being partially struck down by lightning doesn't stop him: he proceeds systematically to break all ten commandments, ticking them off one by one on a handy piece of paper he always carries about with him.

He is greatly assisted in his pursuit by being taken in by his sister-in-law, the beauteous Rachel. She is married to the worthless Harry Luce, an unfaithful, amoral brute who boasts of breaking half a dozen commandments daily and getting away with it. I shan't bother you with the details of this pious concoction, but will set you at peace by assuring you that all ends well. For having taken his Karen, God rewards Seth with her sister, Rachel, happily an exact duplicate, played by the same actress. For Seth, she leaves the dastardly Harry, who, however, gets to deliver the film's wry narration, which may portend eventual salvation even for him.

Especially annoying is the wasting of three fine acting talents. Aidan Quinn, though we may weary of those oceanic blue eyes overflowing his inverted-isosceles face, is a decent Seth; the refinedly sexy Courtney Cox is a beguiling Karen–Rachel; and best of all is the Harry of Anthony LaPaglia. The Australian-born actor is equally good at drama and comedy, on screen and stage, in masterworks or (as here) trash, and should be cast much more often.

Wasted, too, is the superb Polish cinematographer Slawomir Idziak, whose work combines sensuousness and lyricism in the most unassumingly penetrant manner. Watching such winners toil on behalf of Daniel Taplitz makes it hard for the critic not to break at least one commandment, number six.

■ Is there anything in the world more benighted than the typical movie reviewer, who does not even rise to the grander incompetence of a Siskel or Ebert? The batrachian chorus is waxing rapturous over ***Chasing Amy***, as it did, for instance, over *Flirting with Disaster*, a similar piece of attitudinizing persiflage. There is a kind of loose-limbed devil-may-care youth movie (*Fargo* is a slightly more proficient example) that tickles equally laid-back juveniles and trendy codgers, as if flashy anomie were an earnest of quality.

I missed Kevin Smith's acclaimed low-budget debut film *Clerks*, as well as its critically cold-shouldered sequel



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*Mallrats*, but segment three, *Chasing Amy*, despite a certain brio and some funny lines, is not calculated to make me feel deprived. The basic absurdity here is that when Holden, the hero, falls in love (for no compelling reason) with Alyssa, a confirmed lesbian, this converts the young woman (for no compelling reason) to passionate heterosexuality. There are, of course, also a number of ancillary inanities. I suspect that what Smith calls, rather grandly, his New Jersey Trilogy is a case of the whole not exceeding the sum of its parts. To be sure, I have no objection to the writer–director's casting his girlfriend in the lead, except when she is as untalented, unattractive, and mealy-mouthed as Joey Lauren Adams, about whom the ear and the eye will have to fight it out as to which is more victimized. Her leading man, Ben Affleck, is considerably better, except in the car scene in which he pours out his feelings in unison with the pouring rain outside, a bravura passage aimed at the heart, but hitting a somewhat lower organ.

There is good work from Jason Lee, as Holden's fellow cartoonist on Bluntman Comics and woman-hungry roommate (who may be unconsciously chasing Holden), and from Dwight Ewell, in the unsubtle but amusing role of a black homosexual. Kevin Smith repeats his running-gag cameo role as Silent Bob, who is not all that silent, alas, and gets to utter the key speech about everyone's having an Amy, a woman one carelessly lost and is doomed to chase forever. Yet even that is not the film's most bathetic scene, one that I'll let you discover for yourself, if you are desperado enough to seek it out.

The ads for *Chasing Amy* show the heavily airbrushed face of Joey Lauren Adams with the caption, "It's not who you love. It's how." I would say, "It's not who you love, it's whom." □

## *MANNERS*

# Bronx Cheer

RICH LOWRY

LAST year, I was sitting in the lower deck of Yankee Stadium watching reliever Bob Wickman, an overweight sinker-baller, blow a Yankee lead. A couple of runs were already in and the air had left the game, prompting disappointed fans to head for the exits.

Except one sitting behind me who was abusing Wickman with a vehemence unusual even for Yankee Stadium: "You s—, Wickman! You're a fat bum! You s—!" After some hesitation—I wanted to be careful about catching the eye of some crazed thug—I peeked over my shoulder to discover that the assailant was a ten-year-old kid.

This crazed-thug-in-the-making no doubt has many fine days at the Stadium ahead of him. After a fairy-tale 1996 season, the Yankees returned to the South Bronx in April to begin defending their World Series title in one of the most storied and unruly arenas in professional sports. For me, Yankee Stadium has always been a perfect distillation of its surroundings. The Stadium, like its city, has a legendary history. It also happens to be a bastion of ill manners edging into violence and criminality.

Then again, the excesses are part of a high-energy atmosphere that can be exhilarating, even magical; the Stadium, like New York, is an endless mix of the idiotic and the sublime.

It wasn't until 1993—when I briefly lived in Manhattan—that I saw a game at the Stadium. The broadcaster Bob Costas tells a story of how when he was a kid his father, after one game, took him out to the monuments in center field commemorating Yankee greats. The boy was overcome by the thought of walking on the same field as Mickey Mantle. Then, as they looked at the monuments, he got the idea that Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig and the others were actually buried there, and began to cry; Costas remembers it as one of the few tender moments he was ever able to share with his father.

Yankee Stadium, I confess, has never

*Mr. Lowry is NR's national political reporter.*


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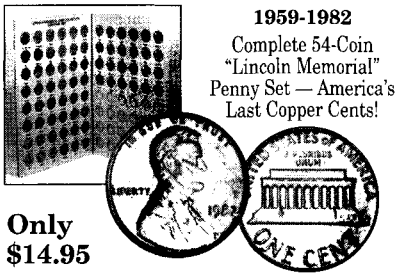

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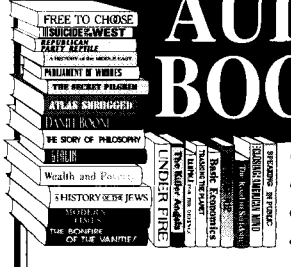

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made me sob. But there is something breathtaking about it, as seen from the upper deck, a huge horseshoe stretching out to the white balustrade high above center field. The grass is a brilliant emerald green, running in huge expanses, especially in left-center field, to the bright blue padding of the outfield walls. It's an outfield that can make fly balls beautiful things, especially when it's the lean Yankee center-fielder Bernie Williams—a flash of pin-striped white against the green—chasing them down with his long, loping strides.

But it didn't take many visits to the Stadium to notice its seamier side. Most ballparks have a seventh-inning stretch; Yankee Stadium has improved on the tradition with a brawl every two or three innings which everyone in a given section stands up to watch. Black eyes are served like Cracker Jacks. I've been at games where play on the field has stopped so that the players could watch rows of bare-chested guys (presumably from Jersey) beat on each other.

Last year, I attended a double-header against the Orioles, which meant 18 innings of drinking instead of just 9. By the second game, almost every face around me in the upper deck was young, male, and drunk. It was like being plopped in the middle of a leering ringside crowd in one of George Bellows's prize-fight paintings. A black guy was trying to panhandle beers. At one point, a grizzled white guy, destined for a night in a gutter somewhere, stumbled down the steps, put both feet up on the railing of the upper deck, and flipped off the entire Stadium with both middle fingers. As he weaved there, nearby rows took up a chant: "JUMP! JUMP! JUMP!"

Needless to say, the Stadium is not hospitable territory for fans of visiting teams. A couple of years ago a few friends from Washington, D.C., came with me to watch another Orioles–Yankees game, wearing their black-and-orange Orioles hats and shirts. They got threatened and harassed the whole game; every time something went the Orioles' way someone would say in a stage whisper: "Gee, I could kick an Orioles fan's a— right now." The funny thing is, one of my friends attended a Yankee game in Baltimore a couple of weeks later and was amazed to find that Yankee fans were bullying Oriole fans even there, outnumbered by a factor of thousands.

In fact, Baltimore's new home is compelling evidence for how a ballpark influences the character of its crowd. The Orioles used to play at the indifferent but rugged Memorial Stadium. The team's new home, Camden Yards, is a much prettier place, but rising ticket prices have pushed out working-class fans. Pricey micro-brews and gourmet food have replaced cans of the low-rent swill National Bohemian. And the crowds, full of lawyers, Washington lobbyists, and homemakers, often cheer as if they were at Wimbledon.

*Yankee Stadium has never made me sob. But there is something breathtaking about it.*

That's never a problem at Yankee Stadium. Which is why—if you have a strong stomach, and if you don't have small children—there's no place like it to watch a game. Evelyn Waugh once wrote that people mistake the collective neurosis of New York for high energy. But there's really not a distinction—the madness creates an energy. The unforgettable electricity of a moment like Don Mattingly hitting his first-ever post-season homer in 1995—celebratory beer cascading down from the upper deck like rain—would be impossible without the nearly insane devotion and intensity of the fans.

Yankee Stadium crowds create the conditions for acts of greatness. Again in 1995, late one play-off game, half of Yankee Stadium taunted Seattle Mariner star Ken Griffey Jr. with the chant: "F— you, Junior." Griffey responded with a clutch homer that silenced the crowd into something like awe. For a Yankee fan, these moments are best, of course, when opponents just don't measure up. After the Yanks scored three early runs in the decisive game of last year's World Series, you could feel the high-powered Atlanta Braves wilting. Braves owner Ted Turner, the smug tycoon who personifies his self-impressed team, left his seat for a breather. The commemorative World Series video captures a New York voice calling out: "Hey Ted, how ya likin' it?"

Turner grimaces: "I'm not." □

## *DELECTATIONS*

# The Beauty of Truth

LINDA BRIDGES

OVER the years I have been given several icons as gifts; and I have found them beautiful but foreign, outside the tradition of religious art that I was at home with. Then this winter, I was reading Frederica Mathewes-Green's *Facing East*, about her conversion to Eastern Orthodoxy [see next page], when the subject of the Lenten study program at my (Episcopal) parish, St. Mary the Virgin, was announced: "The History of Icons." And the Metropolitan Museum's "Glory of Byzantium" show opened soon after.

Mrs. Mathewes-Green used to have rather more of a problem with icons than I did. She writes,

> For many, many years, I didn't like icons. I kept this a secret. People I respected loved icons dearly, so I knew there was something I just didn't get. . . . A friend would pause before an icon, and I would hear that sharp intake of breath and her words, "Oh! Isn't it *beautiful*." "Yes," I'd agree, "how marvelous." I searched the image, trying to find something other than a wizened, severe, and apparently angry Christ. I was thinking, What's beautiful about this?

The beauty, she came to learn, is in Truth. Not that an icon can't be beautiful in artistic terms. But artistic beauty is almost beside the point. One evening in our Lenten class someone asked which church in New York City has the "best" icons. The answer was that the standard by which an icon is judged is not, How many Michelin stars would it get? but, How is it venerated? If no one is moved to pray before it, then be it never so beautiful it belongs in a muse-

*Miss Bridges is* NR*'s managing editor.*



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um, not a church. Fr. Norman Catir, the rector of the Church of the Transfiguration, with which we join forces for our Lenten study, told us of one day when he and his wife, Zulette, were taking delivery of an icon from a master iconographer. The icon was resting against the gate while its new owners dealt with keys. Suddenly an old woman who had been passing by rushed over and knelt down before it, crying, "*Ikon! Ikon!*" It was the genuine article.

This sort of thing poses a problem for many Christians. Our own rector, Fr. Edgar Wells, took the class through the Iconoclastic Controversy, as the history books understatedly call it. During this "controversy," whose hottest phase lasted a century, the iconoclasts indeed smashed sacred images, as their name says; but they also martyred iconodules (those who venerate icons). One might add that the iconoclastic impulse did not die out in 843. A later outbreak resulted in the most visible legacy of the Protestant Reformation. I remember the fierce elderly tour guide in Oxford who, every time she led us into a church where there was clear glass in place of stained, or some truncated piece of wood that should have ended in a carving, would intone, "That's *Cromwell's* doing." The iconoclasts are remembering the words God spoke to Moses: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in Heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."

But of course God spoke those words before the Incarnation. We cannot make an image of God the Father, for we cannot see Him. But once God had the audacity to take on our flesh and come among us as a man, then His face could be represented: not only because it had been seen, but also, and infinitely more importantly, because He had restored the relationship between Himself and the material world, so that physicality did not need to be—indeed, could not properly be—scorned. And in such a world an image *can* be used in worship —not worshipped itself but used, to paraphrase St. Basil the Great, to *transmit* worship to its prototype.

When Western churches display icons, they tend to have one or two in and amongst their other paintings, statues, crucifixes, and so on. In an Orthodox church, the iconostasis forms a whole wall. But so far from regarding it as a window—a window into Heaven. Indeed, as the thinnest point of separation between Heaven and earth.

What are appropriate subjects for icons? Any person or event actually described in Scripture, and any of the saints. I had always thought of icons as predominantly portraits, but there are many others that show whole scenes—the Nativity, the Transfiguration, the Crucifixion, the Ascension, of course. But Mrs. Catir also showed us an icon of Lazarus being raised from the dead, with wonderful reactions from the other people in the scene; and the Met's Byzantium show has a glorious Annunciation, all golden with a ray coming down from Heaven to Mary's heart.

*The standard by which an icon is judged is not, How many Michelin stars would it get?*

In portraits Jesus Himself can be portrayed as the Man of Sorrows, or as the Ruler of All. But probably the best-loved icons are those of Virgin and Child. These come in two forms—the Virgin of the Way, with the Mother of God (or *Theotokos*, God-bearer, as the Orthodox call her) holding her Son up with one hand and gesturing toward Him with the other; and the Virgin of Tenderness, with Mother and Son cheek to cheek.

And here is where, to my mind, we see the most startling difference between Western and Eastern Christian art. Most Western depictions of Our Lady are either sweet or triumphant. I know of nothing in the West comparable to, say, Our Lady of Vladimir, or to the one that first grabbed Mrs. Mathewes-Green, and which is in the Met's show. Our Lady of Vladimir is a Virgin of Tenderness; but she cannot bear to look at her Child, and her eyes are dark with misery. The one at the Met is a Virgin of the Way; she also is looking away from her Child, and instead of pointing toward Him, her right hand opens helplessly. Mrs. Mathewes-Green sees her as already knowing what is to befall ("Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also"); I see her as saying, I know I'm supposed to show Him to the world—but what will you *do* to Him if I do? In any case, it is an image from which squads of museum-goers with their audiophones cannot distract.

I don't imagine we Westerners shall ever treat icons in the same way the Orthodox do; but for us too they can be windows into Heaven. □

## BOOKS IN BRIEF

*Facing East: A Pilgrim's Journey into the Mysteries of Orthodoxy, by Frederica Mathewes-Green (HarperSanFrancisco, 245 pp., $20)*

FREDERICA Mathewes-Green was a highly reluctant convert to Eastern Orthodoxy, "dragged kicking and screaming" by her husband, an Episcopal priest who had come to feel that his own church was bearing false witness. He eventually accepted reordination and started a small mission church in Catonsville, Maryland, under the dispensation of the Antiochian Orthodox Church. This "pilgrim's journey" is his wife's account of a year in the life of their parish, and of how "What was strange and perplexing has become my sweetest home." She tells about icons; the seamless quality of the Divine Liturgy, in which everything is sung; the strictness of the Orthodox disciplines of fasting. This reader cannot help wondering whether the Mathewes-Greens would so quickly have come to feel at home if, instead of founding a small church composed almost entirely of recent converts, with the priest learning right along with his flock (a mixture of American do-it-yourselfery and, yes, something reminiscent of the Early Church), they had joined a big-city parish of Eastern Mediterranean ethnicity. And one should point out that an emphasis on "grateful repentance"—constantly remembering our sinfulness, not in a puritan way but offering our weakness to God—is by no means unique to Eastern Christianity. Still and all, *Facing East* can be read with enjoyment, and much of it with joy, by Western Christians who have no intention of going East. Through the details of this book, one can often see, as through an icon, our Lord Himself. —LINDA BRIDGES



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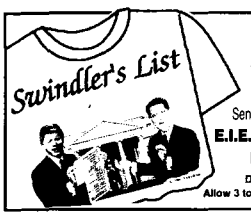


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## STRAUS

(Continued from page 45)

model had the worst combination of the elements of surrender: punishment of the loser, but no occupation or reconstruction, leaving the power-politics game to revive as before. The Bonn model had the best combination: full occupation, democratic reconstruction, the Marshall Plan, and integration with the old democracies through the European Union and NATO.

Apart from the military occupation, the Bonn model was something that Russians were able to imagine being applied to themselves, without having to go through a hot war first. The Marshall Plan had, after all, been offered to Russia, too, in 1947. The EU and NATO were open by law to all European countries. The creation of an institutional West meant that the West could finally be joined without conquest. Here was a dignified way of expressing the fantasy of surrender, a way of translating it into a form that could work. The West could get the global strategic victory; the East would get a firm anchoring to Western ways.

When Gorbachev spoke of a "common European home," this was the dream: if Russia could not defeat the West, at least it could join it. Yet Western officials were more confused by this than hopeful about it; they were no longer looking for such a practical way of implementing the geopolitical equivalent of a Russian surrender, and instead dismissed it as a plot to deceive the West! After decades of managing the Cold War, they had honed their goal to one of conflict management; victory and peace alike were rejected as destabilizing. They had lost the dream of triumph. They had forgotten all about the obligation to accept surrender.

Yeltsin made the offer of a surrender-equivalent even clearer when he came to power and spoke of joining NATO. Still the West showed no interest. Rather than work out the operational specifics of how to accept the Russian surrender, officials began to mumble about how hard it would be for NATO to have to adjust to making decisions with more members.

The West wasn't in a mood to accept a surrender. It was as if it had passed over from modernity into postmodern decadence at the very moment of its triumph.

In 1996, the West finally did accept its first post–Cold War "virtual surrender." After years of fretting, NATO sent its forces into Bosnia. Earlier, the Bush Administration had refused Bosnia's surrender; and after 1993, former officials and supporters of the Bush Administration kept warning that Bosnia could become a quagmire like Vietnam. Then the troops arrived in Bosnia, and there was no resistance at all.

In fact, the Bosnians had been praying for the occupation for years. One of them, Mihajlo Mihajlov, wrote an article under the very title, "Bosnia Is Not Vietnam," to explain why, in fact, the situation was the exact opposite: in Vietnam, nationalism was a cohesive anti-Western force, but in Bosnia the nationalisms were all directed against one another and the vast majority of people wanted a Western occupation force as a liberation from the warring nationalists. Mihajlov turned out to be right.

The West has failed to draw any conclusions from is surprise success in Bosnia. No officials have laid out the lessons of it. No one has examined why the leading authorities were wrong from 1991 to 1995. The West remains unable to figure out how to distinguish a likely quagmire from a likely success.

Not only Bosnians but millions of other Yugoslavians would like to surrender to the West. Hundreds of thousands have already fled to the West. In both Serbia and Croatia, democrats have pleaded publicly for a Western occupation of the entire former Yugoslavia. They'd like the West to arrest the two chief tyrants and war criminals, Milosevic and Tudjman, not just a few underlings in Bosnia. The nationalists accuse the democrats of being advance agents of the Western occupation forces; the only problem is that there aren't any Western forces planning for an occupation.

Farther north, in Hungary, people are positively basking in the "NATO occupation," as it is jocularly called. It is seen as a step toward joining the alliance.

Albania is both an opportunity and a danger. It is an historically open moment. The opportunity is for NATO to insert itself into the opening; the danger is to leave it to other, less benevolent forces to insert themselves. By acting in Albania, NATO could prove itself again as the prime European agency for stability—and meanwhile get a better strategic platform from which to influence events in the former Yugoslavia. If the opportunity is not taken, the chaos could spread from Albania into Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia, and Bosnia—hitting NATO on the tail end for its failure to take active measures on the front end.

They say NATO doesn't know what its troops would do in Albania. Then NATO ought to be making plans so they would know what to do. That is, after all, part of its job description. □



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# ON THE RIGHT / Wm. F. Buckley Jr.

## Chemical Delusions

NEW YORK, APRIL 15

The testimony of the former secretaries of defense who oppose the Chemical Weapons Convention is persuasive and reminds us of the abiding power of the superstition that disarmament leads to the abandonment of force as an instrument of political advancement. The projected treaty is especially vexing in the light of our experience of what can be done by treaty-exegetes who work their own language into a treaty, turning it to purposes inimical to the principal keeper of the peace in this epoch, which is the United States of America.

To give a one-sentence summary of the array of forces: The prime mover behind the treaty was George Bush, while he served as Vice President. The initiative caught the imagination of Mr. Clinton, who went hog-wild over the idea of being the father of a gasless world. The treaty was got up, and April 29 was designated as the day of its promulgation, whether or not the United States had come aboard. The Administration kept urging action before April 29 on the grounds that unless we are then a signatory, we forfeit the power to investigate infractions. The handiest response to this point is, So what? The only nations we'd wish to investigate will not have signed the treaty—e.g., Russia, North Korea, Libya, Iraq, Iran. We are not worried whether Switzerland has reserves of poison gas.

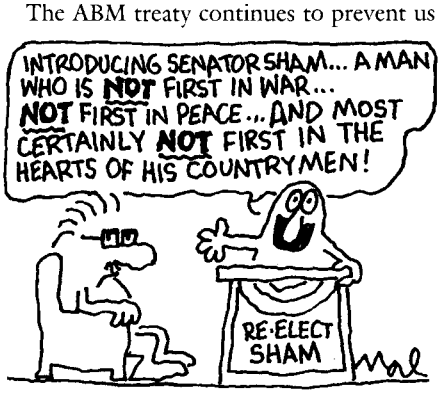
The historical one-sentence summary takes us back to the First World War, when gas as a weapon did its horrible things, leading to such choice memories as the Kellogg–Briand Pact of 1928, which sought to end war for all time by very simply outlawing it (did K–B get the Nobel Peace Prize?). More serious, because more modest, was the Geneva Protocol which forbade the use of chemical weapons but not their manufacture. This distinction was important because it tacitly approved an inventory of chemical weapons to be used against any aggressor who initiated the use of them. It is everywhere accepted that the reason gas was not used in the Second World War was that the Allies had a stock of it, ready to use if the Nazis began the argument. The Australians came into the picture in 1984 with their proposal to outlaw the transfer of chemical-weapons-related technologies to the Third World. We (and 28 other countries) went along with the Australian group, but not so comprehensively as to accomplish our goal.

We got through the Second World War without chemical weapons but not through the subsequent decades. They were used in the Eighties by Vietnam and Iraq. Not against the United States, but against the Hmong and the Kurds. Countries that use chemical weapons, like countries inclined to use atomic weapons, do not pick on other countries their own size.

A paper by the Heritage Foundation's Baker Spring reminds us that the convention does not require the destruction of toxic chemicals, "their precursors (chemicals that can be combined to form toxic chemicals), or facilities that are used for peaceful purposes." To oversee the manufacture of anything so common would require a vast bureaucracy. The Phillips Petroleum Company subsidiary in Belgium delivered the chemical thiodiglycol (used in manufacturing mustard gas) to Iraq, and Britain is reported to have sold thiodiglycol and thionyl chloride to Iraq in 1988 and 1989. All of which suggests the difficulty in effective control of exports.

We come now to the question of sanctions. What kind of inspections can be done? Suppose that a country refuses to admit the chemical-convention investigator. Next step? We petition for a vote (we must get three-quarters) of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. But any sanctions thereafter proposed are subject to the veto of any one of the permanent seatholders in the United Nations Security Council. It is worth recalling that the right to inspect does not automatically lead to the right to suppress. The UN has exercised for years the right to inspect for nuclear and chemical/biological weapons in Iraq. The only thing we have absolutely ascertained is that we can't find them.

The ABM treaty continues to prevent us from fruitful explorations of space-based anti-missile technology. Even so tough-minded a Chief Executive as Ronald Reagan shrank from rescinding it, though he might have done so with six months' notice. The proposed chemical-weapons treaty would probably have the same effect in robbing us of future flexibility. Above all, the treaty tends to ignore axiomatic reality, which is that the only way you deal with nations that present threats of the kind we are discussing is to keep your powder dry but keep your powder. □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## Conservative Split On China

NEW YORK, APRIL 22

A quarrel is gestating within the American conservative community having to do with the proper response to matters Chinese. By this is meant China's economic growth, her sharpening despotism, her rearmament, and her scheduled re-annexation of Hong Kong.

*The Weekly Standard*, the Washington-based conservative journal skippered by William Kristol, inclines to much thunder on the matter—short of a declaration of war, some of its writers are asking for the equivalent of a boycott. The editors of NATIONAL REVIEW adduce a different perspective, giving much prominence to the analyses of our colleague Peter Rodman, the Director of National Security Programs at the Nixon Center for Peace and Freedom, longtime scholarly Cold Warrior, and sometime associate of Henry Kissinger. *NR* counsels watchful prudence on the Chinese front, this side of the economic boycotts elsewhere advocated.

In the spring of 1980 I wrote a piece for *Foreign Affairs* attempting to set down a plausible attitude by America toward human rights. I thought it useful to remind the reader that in 1965 President Johnson had sent Marines into the Dominican Republic, which is the eastern half of the island of Hispaniola. The reason given—and accepted—was that there were stirrings in the Dominican Republic, much as there were stirrings 18 years later in Grenada, that suggested the possibility of another Soviet salient in our back yard. Castro's satellization had very nearly got us into a world war, and the strategic view from America, ever since the crystallization of the Cold War in 1947, was that any advance by the Communists anywhere threatened a penetrated membrane in Western defense. This was true of Greece and Lebanon, Berlin and Quemoy, Korea and Vietnam, Cuba and Afghanistan.



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The Dominican venture is important in retrospect because the western half of Hispaniola is where Haiti is, and at the time we landed the Marines in Santo Domingo, Papa Doc Duvalier reigned two hundred miles to the west, one of the most conspicuous sadists of the century, the quintessential human-rights violater. Against Papa Doc our energies were primarily moral and, only late in the game, economic.

The abiding point in my 17-year-old analysis is that the business of the government is to concern itself with vital threats to its own interest and to reject the Wilsonian alternative as quite simply beyond our powers. Mr. Rodman reminds us that China, however odious its internal policies, is different from the Soviet Union, with its forthright determination to conquer the world in the name of Marxism. China is passionate as an irredentist power, not as an expansionist power. It covets Hong Kong and Taiwan. Mrs. Thatcher ceded Hong Kong, pursuant to a century-old covenant; Taiwan we will never, under sound leadership, concede. But China as a sphere of influence must be contended with, and the means of doing this are continued military predominance and carefully oriented policies toward South Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Burma, Russia, and India.

Immediately before the house is the question of trade with China. During the Cold War, conservatives led by the thinking of NATIONAL REVIEW opposed trade with the Soviet Union on the grounds that sound strategy called for the maximum exploitation of any Soviet weakness, its economy foremost among these weaknesses. The free-traders won out and can claim whatever credit history will award them for what was once called the Sears, Roebuck approach to Communism. (Sprinkle a million copies of the Sears, Roebuck catalogue over Russia, Professor David Riesman semi-jocularly wrote in the Fifties, and the austerity of Communist life will bring on the needed implosion.) The conservative attitude toward trade with the Soviet Union was one part economic strategy, one part moral indignation.

China is not now a threat on the order of the Soviet threat, so that the question of appropriate behavior focuses on the moral, not the strategic, question. Here relevant is the distinction attempted in *Foreign Affairs*, drawn from the maxim of John Quincy Adams that the American people are friends of liberty everywhere but custodians only of their own.

We must seek out means of expressing our contempt for and hatred of religious and other persecution in China. The weightiest sanction we ever deployed against the Soviet Union was the boycott of its Olympic Games. It is from such an inventory that we need to choose our weapons. For the rest, trade should be evaluated with strict reference to the economic question. And our military must, as ever, guard the ramparts. China is growing quickly, and has much to learn. We are growing less quickly, and also have much to learn. □

## *Tearing-Out-Your-Hair Time*

NEW YORK, APRIL 17

Once every two or three years guardians of light & truth should look in on the concerns of consumers. The model tells us that consumer reactions optimize service and quality. Well, the model is instructive, but every now and again it is a miserable failure. Everyone has a bitter memory; ours is the telephone company's infuriating failure to activate the telephone system when *NR* changed quarters, with some delays extending to two months. But what do you do when you get mad at NYNEX? If you are proficient with the Internet (which I am not), you mobilize such passion as lies there in wait to protest aggression. The Internet is invaluable in such matters, even though, as is expected, they go overboard half the time.

Then there is the supplier. You need, let's say, a spare part for your computer. The part is so commonplace you don't, on ordering it, have the feeling you are asking for a kidney replacement, for which the waiting time is very long. If the part exists in the United States, you tell your technician, then there is no reason for it not to be at your door the next morning. All that needs doing is: Call FedEx.

But there is this odd cultural hangover from the railroad days. It used to be understandable that a part manufactured in California could be expected to pass a week or so on the road if ordered in Boston. WHY DO THEY STALL YOU BY SAYING YOUR PART IS "ON ORDER"? It shouldn't be "on order" except for the three minutes it takes to telephone or fax the supplier. At the end of three minutes it should be en route. I have been waiting three weeks for three items which, I am day after day reassured, are "on order." Somebody somewhere in Asia is waiting for more slave labor to produce my items, is that the problem? No other explanation comes to mind.

Then there is the obdurate boredom of needing to pay out, piece by piece, your credit-card pedigree. I forget the name of the British eccentric who amused himself by figuring out how many cumulative hours in the average lifetime would be spent, e.g., brushing one's teeth (something like 23 weeks). It would satisfy a little curiosity niche to know how much time, before we die, we'll have spent reciting: 1) the credit-card carrier, 2) 16 digits, 3) the date of the card's expiration, 4) the exact spelling of the name of the cardholder. Wouldn't it be infinitely easier to compress the whole of the above into a single set of numbers? It's a guess, but not entirely uninformed, that the addition of four digits would give the petitioners the whole bit. So you'd say over the phone, "I am 2334-4556-6778-8991-0112." End! That would relay name, expiration date, the whole scene.

Since we are engaged in making life easier for the consumer, here is my ten-million-dollar idea. A lot of us types spend months and years at the keyboard. As things are, in order to write out a capital letter you need 1) to move a little finger to the side of the keyboard, 2) to depress the shift button, then 3) to strike the letter of the alphabet you desire to capitalize.

My sunburst is pathetically simple. Why doesn't a keyboard manufacturer come up with a board that prints out a capital letter if you depress the key more firmly? Thus "a" is what happens with the regular, light touch. But if you depress "a" firmly you get . . . "A". ThE qUiCk BrOwN fOx JuMpEd OvEr ThE lAzY dOg. Tremendous, no? Simple alteration of finger pressure. I will share the royalties with anyone enterprising enough to pick up the telephone (assuming NYNEX has got around to installing yours), call a keyboard manufacturer, and give him the idea. You keep one-half of the royalty, send me the other half. That goes for the credit-card idea too, fifty–fifty.

Sometimes our consumer appetites take us further than modesty justifies. But dream along with me. My fantasy is to figure out a way to do something about the music you are made to listen to.

"That number is not the correct number. Please stay on the line. We WANT your business. We WANT to serve you. Please stay on the line." There comes then some hideous pulsating soul-searing rock music. You are *required* to listen to it because otherwise you *can't hear the lady who comes back with the right number!* Little frustrations lead to big fits of melancholy, and these are not tax deductible, though come to think of it, there may be a breed of lawyers coming in from the grievance factories who will figure out a way to monetize that imposition: People should be made to pay, shouldn't they, when they abridge your civil right to listen only to what you want to listen to? Calling Alan Dershowitz. I'll keep 10 per cent of that one too. □

*(Universal Press Syndicate)*



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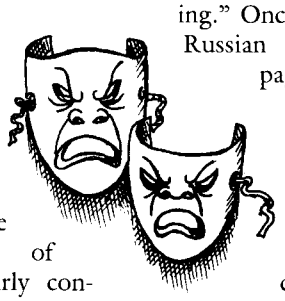
# THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER

FLORENCE KING

PARENTS of the pre-television era kept children quiet indoors by handing out pencils and paper and paying a penny for every word we could get out of jawbreakers such as "sesquicentennial" and "antidisestablishmentarianism."

As the twig is bent, so grows the tree. To see how many things America has democratized, I completed the sentence, "Everybody's got a right to . . . " for hours of rainy-day fun.

My first answers came quickly and held no surprises. Everybody's got a right to fame, wealth, self-esteem, genius, creativity, true love, multiple orgasms, home ownership, and law school—the self-evident truths, if you will. The pleasure-and-profit aspects of American leveling were fairly constant, and, notwithstanding some new cupidities, as banal as ever.



My second-tier answers revealed a bizarre side to our leveling urge that was more interesting. Between daytime TV and the welter of magazine covers containing a diagram of the human brain, Americans have begun to envy people with multiple personalities, buried memories, one-of-a-kind genes, and yet-to-be-understood medical "disorders" with an easily remembered name that goes with "My Fight Against . . . "

Peel away the modern scientific trappings and we see the fine hand of democratization at work. Ancestral memory tells us that peasants are strong as oxen; rare ailments are the mark of an aristocrat and outright decrepitude is found only in royal houses. Pulsing through the American subconscious is the passionate conviction that everybody's got a right to the Wittlesbach Taint and whatever it was that hit every third Hapsburg. Moreover, the newly formed anti-circumcision society is a clue that somebody out there is striving for Capet Foreskin.

*Miss King is the author of* The Florence King Reader *and other books.*

As my mind ranged over the upscale magazine ads that promote the ghostly pallor of decadence and new lipstick shades named "fungus" and "internal bleeding," I wrote: "Everybody's got a right to be a nihilist." Oh, surely not, I amended silently, it wasn't possible. Nonetheless, it's happened. We have democratized nihilism.

Naturally we have refashioned it to conceal its traditional connection with openly unhappy intellectuals—because even nihilism must be "unthreatening." Once restricted to characters in Russian novels who took twenty pages to say "Nothing matters"; later associated with solitary anarchists who cooked over canned heat and expatriates in black turtleneck sweaters who started little magazines called *Flux*, nihilism is now as American as the baseball strike zone, which has disappeared.

You remember the strike zone. It's one of those things that generations of us learned so early in life that we sometimes got it mixed it up with other sacred texts and wound up saying, "Now I lay me down to sleep, over the plate between the shoulders and the knees."

Today's strike zone is wherever a particular umpire feels like putting it. Having already shortened it to somewhere above the belt, some umpires are now widening it, calling strikes on pitches well off the plate, as the above-the-plate camera angles clearly show. It all depends upon which umpire is calling the game. An arbitrary strike zone is no strike zone, but few find it disturbing and sportscasters even include it in their patter. "He's got a tight one . . . he's got a wide one," they quip in matter-of-fact monotones, as if meaninglessness were merely our beloved independence writ a little larger.

All American movements have subdivisions. If baseball is ruled by Populist Nihilism, Nihilism Chic has women in its grip as dress sizes abandon even a nodding acquaintance with basic arithmetic and turn literally into the "little nothing" of fashion legend. Women have always wanted to wear a smaller size than they actually took, so designers accommodated them by cutting small sizes big. This was a manageable deception back when the ideal figure was "a perfect 12," but then women decided that double-digit sizes sounded fat, so down they went to 8, 6, 4, and 2, any of which might be the same size as the old size 12 depending upon who designed it.

SO WHAT happens to women who already wear a size 2 when legions of plumper women decide they like the sound of it? Washington boutique owner Betsy Fisher found out when a designer said his company might introduce a size 0, "which is insanity," she told the *Washington Post*.

Do not put it past women to boast of being "a perfect zero." Nothing can restrain them except the U.S. Bureau of Standards, but it stopped regulating clothing sizes in 1942. When the government cancels one of the few useful services it ever performed, we have as good a definition of nihilism as any in the dictionary.

America is engaged in the pursuit of nothingness as if it were a new right that just turned up under a penumbra. Dumbing-down, audio books, the contents of anything labeled "-free," especially when consumed by women trying to be a perfect zero, are all nihilistic in spirit, but we reserve black-hole status for our legal system. The only jury that can be impaneled is one that knows nothing, never heard of anybody, and has no opinions whatsoever on any subject under the sun. Media commentators help it along by putting "alleged" in front of everything, conveying the notion that there is no criminal, no victim, no police, no witnesses, no crime, no case.

Nihilism's first cousin is passivity, as in the recent case of the Massachusetts teens who got their kicks from the muscle relaxant, Robaxin, evidently the latest thing in recreational drugs. I happen to know something about Robaxin, having taken it years ago when I hurt my back—never mind how—and I can testify that only a nihilist would consider it a turn-on. I felt like an empty wet suit, like one of Salvadore Dali's limp watches; a *rasa* without a *tabula*, a *schmerz* without a *Welt*, a *raison* without a *d'être*. In retrospect, however, it seems I was *avant* with a *garde*. □



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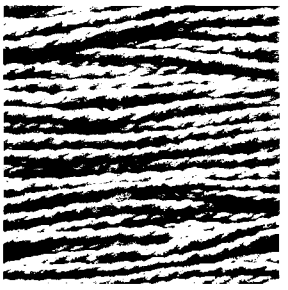
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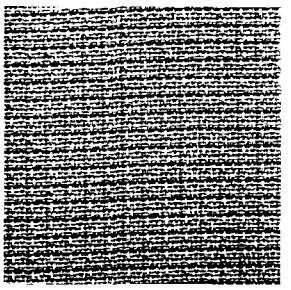
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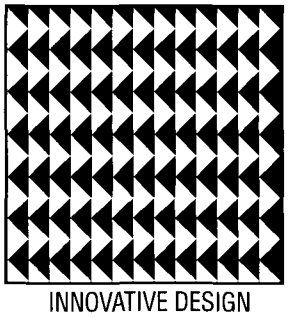
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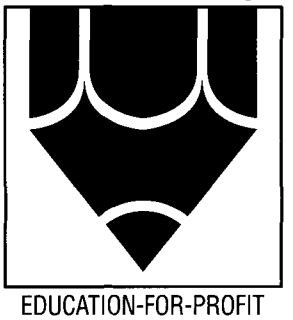
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**THE BOMBAY SAPPHIRE MARTINI. AS INTERPRETED BY ADAM TIHANY.**

POUR SOMETHING PRICELESS.

Bombay® Sapphire™ Gin. 47% alc/vol (94 Proof). 100% grain neutral spirits. ©1992 Carillon Importers, Ltd., Teaneck, N.J. ©1992 Adam Tihany.

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